ISRAEL,

A

JUVENILE POEM.

BY

SERENA.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BRITISH MUSEUM

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UNDER THE AUSPICES OF

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE

COUNTESS DOWAGER POWLETT.

VOL. II.



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M DCC XCV.

BRITISH MUSEUM

BOOK II.

CANTO I.

AS falls the faded foliage with the blaſt,
When howling Boreas ſweeps the ſpacious vaſt;
Or as the ev'ning's flitting ſhadows play,
And vaniſh at the morning's cheering ray;
So fleeting time to dark oblivion ſwept
Old Iſrael's ſons where their forefathers ſlept:
Forth from the roots the ſpreading branches riſe,
In foes' deſpite—the favour'd of the ſkies.

A haughty monarch, with deſpotic hand,
Who knew not Joſeph, ſway'd th' Egyptian land,
With envious eye he mourn'd their great increaſe,
Unrein'd his vengeance to deſtroy their race.

His peers conven'd—the miſchiefs of the ſtate,
And fruitful Iſrael, form'd their chief debate:
" Behold, (he cried) what countleſs Hebrews riſe,
And thro' our coaſt the ſwarms attract our eyes;
Should war prevail, then to our neighb'ring foe
Theſe aliens fly, and from our ſervice go:
Let o'er their hoſts ſtern taſk-maſters have ſway,
And weighty burdens on their ſhoulders lay."
He ſaid—and riſing from the throne of ſtate,
Bent to complete devoted Iſrael's fate.

Ere Aurora's orient eye
Relights the beauties of the ſky,
And with vivific fervor glows
On the ſweet exhaling roſe;

The hard decree to peaceful Goſhen flies,
And o'er the land th' Egyptian tyrants riſe.
No more the rural ſwains attune their lay,
And with their flocks o'er fertile Goſhen ſtray;
The firſtling lambs, which thro' the vallies feed,
No more on Iſrael's ſacred altars bleed;
No more the nymphs along th' enamell'd plain
With fleecy charge attend the ſhepherd's ſtrain,

Whoſe ſhrill pipe 'woke with glee the woodland
ſong,
Whilſt thrilling echoes ſoftly flit along.
To Goſhen's land the hardy tyrants ſped,
And from the fields th' affrighted ſhepherds fled:
Their daily taſks receiv'd, the toiling ſlaves,
Exiſtence loathing, wait their welcome graves;
Their death in vain Egyptian pow'rs deviſe,
They yet increaſe, and new-born Hebrews riſe.
That Iſrael thrives is grievous to the foe—
Still they afflict, and ſtill the Hebrews grow.
The rig'rous taſks in mortar, brick, and lime,
If not fulfill'd, are puniſh'd as a crime;
The lofty walls of Pithom meet the ſkies,
And cities for the monarch's pleaſure riſe.
They build, and weep; a ceaſeleſs train of woes
Bears down their ſpirits, and forbids repoſe.
The king commands his ſervants to deſtroy,
And gentler Nile receives each infant boy.
The tender mothers, fainting with diſtreſs,
Their ſmiling babes to their fond boſoms preſs;
Torn from parental arms their prey they bore,
And as they plunge—th' affrighted waters roar.

—As *now* whole fam'lies to devouring deeps,
In Gallia's land, a modern Pharoah ſweeps;*
In the deſtructive barge, their hands confin'd,
To horrid death the guiltleſs are conſign'd:
Devoted—dreadful—to remorſeleſs waves,
The parents with their offspring find their graves.
The waters roar, th' affrighted children moan,
Hang round their ſires, who utter groan for groan.
The infant victim on its mother's breaſt,
Smiling unconſcious, yields to balmy reſt;
While toſt from wave to wave old Loire o'erflows,
And the deſpairing wretches end their woes.
A gen'ral ſhriek of horror and deſpair
Sudden burſts forth, and murmurs thro' the air,
The waters ſick'ning with the carnage there.
Amram, the ſon of Levi's ancient houſe,
Forth from his num'rous kindred took his ſpouſe;
The tuneful Miriam bleſs'd her parent's ſight,
And Aaron lives in enemies' deſpite.
A ſecond ſon prevents them from repoſe,
Conceal'd within to hide him from his foes.

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* Alluding to Robeſpierre's maſſacre at Nantz.

Three months—no more—could they their infant
ſave
From the dread horrors of the ſurgy grave.
Beſide the bank where lucid waters flow,
Among the flags the kindly ruſhes grow;
The mother's hand a baſket form'd with art,
In which ſhe laid the darling of her heart;
With ſlime and pitch ſhe daub'd the outſide o'er,
Then midſt the flags ſhe laid it on the ſhore—
To God her pray'rs addreſs'd with ardent ſoul,
To check the waves, nor let the billows roll.
This done, far off his ſiſter Miriam ſat,
And watch'd the infant boy's precarious fate.
Forth from her palace came the royal maid,
Daughter of Pharoah, with her train ſurvey'd
The flowing Nile, and at her leiſure ſtray'd;
She ſpy'd the ark—by her command 'twas brought,
And curious for the hidden treaſure ſought;
Soft in his bed the child had ſweetly ſlept,
And ſuddenly awaken'd, lo! he wept.
To her fair boſom ſhe the babe cloſe preſs'd,
And thus ſhe ſpake—as pity warm'd her breaſt:

" Some Hebrew, to preſerve his ſon awhile,
Has laid him helpleſs on the bank of Nile;
Sweet little Iſraelite! I ſeal thee mine,
And from the gods I hail the gift divine:
Leſt with unskilful hand th' Egyptian wife
Deprive the infant ſtranger of his life,
From yonder green that Hebrew maiden ſend,
And bid ſome nurſe from Goſhen's land attend."
This ſaid, with gladſome ſteps young Miriam flies,
The joyful tidings ſparkling in her eyes;
The anxious mother, waiting full of pain,
Heard, and appear'd before the royal train;
Eager ſhe came, when thus the princeſs ſaid—
" Nurſe thou this child—I'll ſee thy wages paid."
Beneath a parent's care the Levite youth
Won the fair fame of piety and truth;
Soon to the court the favour'd boy is led,
And, as the princeſs' ſon, in grandeur bred:
Moſes ſhe nam'd him, (" for did I not ſave
The lovely infant from a wat'ry grave?)
Thus the Almighty wiſdom ſhines,
Completing all his vaſt deſigns;

The wrath of mortals, and their way,
And all their ſchemes, his will obey;
His pow'r each heart to means and actions bend,
And works productive of ſome needful end.
Wiſdom matur'd by age, as Moſes grows,
With ſacred fervor in his boſom glows;
Taught by his parents, in the ſecret hour,
Th' oblations due to one Almighty Pow'r:
" To Pharoah's imag'd gods bow not thy knee,
Nor to the ritual acts prophane agree,
Leſt that dread hand which ſpread the heavens abroad,
And thence reveal'd himſelf the mighty God,
On thy preſumption let his wrath ariſe,
And bid his terrors thy young ſoul ſurpriſe."
Engraven on his heart, the words divine
In all his thoughts and all his actions ſhine.
In Pharoah's court he thought upon his God,
And forth from royal Egypt rang'd abroad;
His pitying eye ſurveys, o'er Goſhen's plain,
His burden'd brethren droop with toilſome pain;
And as he penſive ſtray'd, he ſaw a foe
With cruel hand the ſmarting ſcourge beſtow

On a poor ſlave:—he ſicken'd at the ſight,
And haſt'ning to the haughty ſon of might,
Sent a defiance, as he march'd along,
Fierce to atone th' inhoſpitable wrong.
The petty tyrant with diſdain began
With language rude t' inſult the princely man,
Then roſe his wrath like as when whirlwinds riſe,
And heave the deep to daſh the angry skies.
He looks around—none near—with mighty blow
Dead on the ground he fell'd th' oppreſſive foe;
Then hid him in the ſand:—when next he ſtray'd,
He wiſt not that the ſecret was betray'd;
As roving o'er the plains, indulging thought,
Two angry Hebrews with rude vi'lence fought.
" Why would'ſt thou do thy fellow wrong?" he cried,
To whom with warmth the Hebrew quick replied:
' Art thou a prince, to judge our acts, like this,
And ſay what is or what is not amiſs?
Wilt thou kill me, as thou the other day
With haſty paſſion didſt th' Egyptian ſlay?
The jealous monarch, rous'd to wrath ſevere,
Decrees thy death, ſhouldſt thou again appear.'

This Moſes heard, nor waited to reply,
But ſwift conceal'd him from each prying eye;
When ſhelt'ring night had wrapt her mantle round,
And drowſy pow'rs inſenſate mortals bound,
From Egypt he purſued his weary way
O'er Midian hills—as morning ſhot her ray.
Deep in diſtreſs, to all his woes reſign'd,
Beſide a well th' afflicted man reclin'd:
In Pharoah's court, at ſumptuous tables fed,
He now in mis'ry finds the want of bread;
Whilſt the Almighty pow'r works him relief,
Hope ſhoots from heav'n, and mitigates his grief.
As the bright ſun irradiates the skies,
Hope cheers the boſom pregnant with emprize;
Whilſt proſp'rous rays th' unwary trav'ller warms,
Sudden the glooms portend the pending ſtorms:
Happy for him who finds a refuge nigh
From ruſhing torrents and inclement ſky;
When ſoon again the ſmiling proſpects riſe,
More dear, more pleaſant, to the mourning eyes.

CANTO II.

IN Midian's land, where lofty mounts diſplay
The vivid glories of the riſing day,
The fruitful vallies charm th' admiring view,
And tow'ring trees in blooming beauty grew.
The nymphs of Jethro kept their father's ſheep,
And rang'd with youthful glee the verdant ſteep,
When eve advancing warn'd them to their tent,
Within the folds their fleecy care was pent;
Their flocks to water, firſt they fill the troughs,
Where Moſes ſat, intent on all his woes.
The neighb'ring ſhepherds thro' the vallies ſtray,
Come to the well, and drove the flock away;
In wanton miſchief to perplex eſſay'd,
And make each modeſt ſhepherdeſs afraid:

Then Moſes roſe—juſt anger fires his eye—
He aids the nymphs, and makes the ſhepherds fly.
Patient in ſuff'ring, valiant in the fight,
In a juſt cauſe his arm was ſtrung with might.
Now eve in ſable mantle veil'd,
Pourtrays her ſhadows o'er the field;
And Luna, in her ſilver veſt,
O'er mountain's brow peeps down the Weſt:
The damſels each their gratitude diſcloſe,
And leave the weary Hebrew to repoſe.
With joyous ſteps they reach their rural home,
And enter'd (fraught with news) the cheerful dome;
" Some ſhepherd (they their liſt'ning ſire addreſt)
Sat by our well, in garb unuſual dreſt;
Striving to hide the ſorrows of his mind,
Sedately ſmiling, and humanely kind.
When the rude ſwains our fleecy charge aſſail'd,
This ſtranger o'er the daring crew prevail'd;
Oft to the well with kindly ſpeed he goes,
For us with gen'rous care he fill'd the troughs."
' Where is the man—why came he not with you,
(The ſire replied) to take what is his due?'

Forth went the rev'rend prieſt before the night,
And brought him in to ſhare the feaſtful rite.
On the clean hearth the bundled fern they throw,
The kindling flames the genial heat beſtow;
Then from the flowing ſpring the water clear,
To waſh the ſtranger's feet, the damſels bear.
Th' ablution o'er, the oozing water wrung,
He feels his limbs with freſher vigour ſtrung;
Then ready ſtood, ſoon as his ſandals brac'd,
At the clean board which grateful viands grac'd;
The prieſt with kind regard the fire-ſide
Forc'd on his gueſt, nor would he be denied.
Such hoſpitality ſo kindly ſhown,
To them he makes his caſe and kindred known.
As from his lips the well-form'd ſtory flows,
Surpriſe and love within each mind aroſe:
" Th' Egyptian monarch, jealous of the race
Of Abram, whom our God had choſe to bleſs,
Vengeful commands his ſervants to deſtroy
Each perſecuted Hebrew's new-born boy.
From out the boiſt'rous Nile's relentleſs waves,
My infant life th' Egyptian princeſs ſaves!

In Pharoah's court, where mirth and love diſplay
Enticing charms, I ſpent my early day;
With troubled heart I ſaw my brethren ſlaves,
And their young babes conſign'd to watry graves;
Zealous for God, I ſtretch'd my daring hand,
A tyrant ſlew, and hid him in the ſand.
To Egypt's king th' unſeemly act tranſpir'd,
He ſought my life, and I from thence retir'd."
He adds no more—his lips in ſilence clos'd,
Worn with fatigue, he on his ſeat repos'd.
The words gain'd credit flowing from his tongue,
And o'er the tale attentively they hung;
Thus hoſpitable, they with cheering ſmile,
And courteous welcome, all his griefs beguile.
The queen of night her lunar ray beſtows,
On a ſoft couch they left him to repoſe.
Seven daughters claim'd old Jethro's anxious cares,
Each beauteous nymph his ſtrong affection ſhares;
The Hebrew's charms their influence impart,
And love commutual ſway'd Zipporah's heart.
The prieſt of Midian in his gueſt delights,
And with a parent's joy the pair unites.

Two lovely boys on him his God beſtows,
The gifts divine make him forget his woes;
Thus paſs'd his days, as fleeting time roll'd on,
And pious worth in all his actions ſhone.
  Virtue beaming in the heart,
  Soft and peaceful joys impart;
  What the painful world beſtows
  Begins with hope, and ends in woes;
As when a ſhip, exploring ocean wide,
Drives thro' the waves, till 'whelm'd beneath the tide.
  By God's decree th' Egyptian monarch died,
Yet ſtill the Iſraelites in bondage ſigh'd;
A king more ſavage next aſcends the throne,
Beneath whoſe ſway the wretched people groan;
To God the Hebrews' weeping anguiſh roſe,
He heard—intending to redreſs their woes.
From Empyrean throne his ſearching eye
Reſpects his choſen, and attends their cry.
JEHOVAH frowns—we ſink in deep deſpair;
He ſmiles—we riſe, releas'd from ev'ry care.

CANTO III.

ON Horeb's mount, tremendous, tow'ring high,
Mantled in clouds, familiar with the ſky!
Sacred to that dread Pow'r who rais'd its height,
Viewleſs—in vain is ſtretch'd the aching ſight;
His father's flock the meek-ey'd Moſes tends,
And to JEHOVAH's mount his footſtep bends.
Behind the wond'rous ſteep, an awful view!
Up on its ſide a lonely deſert grew;
Old Jethro's flock the richeſt verdure ſhares,
And Moſes ſtood attentive on his cares.
When lo! from regions of eternal day,
Deſcending downward the aërial way,
A radiant form in fervid glory ſhone,
And ſhot refulgence as it glided on!

The refluent beams o'erſhade the noontide ray,
And vie tranſlucent with the orb of day.
Within a buſh, veil'd in ſurrounding blaze,
Conceal'd it ſtood from Moſes' eager gaze!
The lively gales with ſofter paſtime blew,
And trembling to their ſecret caverns flew;
Th' affrighted flock refrain'd their noiſy bleat,
And ruſhing onward ſought ſome ſafe retreat:
All nature paus'd! the ſhepherd nearer drew,
Then ſhudd'ring ſtood, nor wiſt he what to do.
As thunder through th' ethereal concave hurl'd,
Shakes with its direful roar the tott'ring world;
An awful voice forth from the buſh reſounds,
The ſcatter'd flock on Horeb's brow rebounds;
And GOD ſaid, "Moſes, Moſes!"—"Here am I,'
The trembling ſhepherd haſty made reply;
The voice rejoining, nature ſhook around!
"Take off thy ſhoes, this place is holy ground."
As ſpake the Almighty, Moſes, ſmote with dread,
His modeſt face beneath his mantle hid:
So when the ſun glides upward to the ſkies,
The queen of night toward her chamber flies.

"I am thy God! and when my people ſigh'd,
And to my throne with bitter anguiſh cried,
Thee I ordain'd to mitigate their woes,
And bring them forth from their oppreſſive foes·
I'll lead them ſafely through the thorny wild,
Like as a parent leads his darling child.
To Canaan's land, where milk and honey flow,
Where luſcious vines and plenteous herbage grow;
Where haughty Baſan and Amorians ſway,
And impious Moab Moloch's prieſts obey;
At whoſe infernal ſhrine the heathen ſtates,
With blood-ſtain'd wizards, ſpy out ſecret fates;
Th' adjoining realms, where giant nations riſe,
Preſumptuous rebels to aſſault the ſkies,
Shall be poſſeſt by Jacob's favour'd race,
And foes around ſhall fly before their face.
Come, let me ſend thee to th' Egyptian land,
To ſave my people from oppreſſion's hand."

Then Moſes ſpake to God with humble dread,
'Shall I from Egypt's land thy people lead?
Lo! I am naught before proud Pharoah's eye,
How can I go? for who, alas! am I!'

Him anſwer'd GOD—"Propitious to thy way,
Thou ſhalt return victorious from the fray."
Then Moſes ſaid—'They will inquire the name
Of him by whoſe authority I came.'
"Who built the earth, (th' Almighty voice replied)
Whilſt at his will the rolling planets glide?
Who in its bed the boiſt'rous billows flung,
And round the ſhore the rocky limits hung?
Who ſpread the ample skies, and veil'd them o'er,
And bids them ſhine, or calms the thunder's roar?
Thus thou ſhalt ſay I AM (thy father's GOD)
Sent me to ſpread his wonders far abroad!"
The pauſing Pow'r awaits reply,
Whilſt gazing ſeraphs from the sky
Attune their heav'n-ton'd harps around,
Celeſtial hoſts the ſong reſound;
All liſt'ning, when the conteſt new began,
Between th' Almighty Sire and mortal man.
Whilſt Moſes, loath to go the painful way,
Muſing diſmay'd, he wiſts not what to ſay;
At length, he bolder grown, the ſilence broke,
And trembling, thus the awful Power beſpoke:

'If thou to me this ardent task ordain,
Will they believe, or liberty regain?'
"What haſt thou in thy hand?" th' Almighty cried,
'A rod, my GOD!' the daunted man replied.
A voice did then from flaming buſh reſound,
"Stretch forth thy rod, and caſt it on the ground."
This done—behold! before his wond'ring eyes
A ſerpent roſe! and he with terror flies;
Its glowing skin in various colours gleam,
Whilſt ſwiftly gliding on the graſſy green;
"Retake thy rod," the man obeys again,
And oft eſſays—th' eſſays long time were vain;
At length he caught it, wreathing on the ground,
And in his hand the wond'rous rod he found!
Then in his boſom, by the dread command,
Impell'd by fear, he hid his trembling hand;
Whilſt in his breaſt vaſt thoughts with wonder glow,
Pluck'd forth his hand as leprous as the ſnow!
Again within his breaſt his hand he bore,
Then pluck'd it forth, juſt as it was before.

"If this," the LORD rejoin'd, "no credit gain,
And they in ſtubborn unbelief remain,
Stretch forth thy rod above the rolling flood,
And o'er the land I'll turn it into blood."
Then Moſes ſaid—'Of ſpeech I am ſo ſlow,
That from my tongue no eloquence will flow.'
Thus anſwer'd GOD—"Who makes the dumb
to talk?
Who makes the blind to ſee, the lame to walk?
Is it not I?—now therefore, go thy way,
I'll guide thee on, and teach thee what to ſay."
The daring man replied,—'My Lord, attend,
And by another hand thy meſſage ſend.'
As when a cloud in black'ning horrors grow,
With threat'ning ruin to the realms below,
The ſun majeſtic from the clouds ariſe,
And ſmiles effulgent o'er the frowning skies;
So roſe th' Almighty's wrath to ſtrike him dead,
But in his gracious breaſt compaſſion pled:
He ſpake—the riſing anger quick repreſs'd,
And calmly thus the ſtubborn man addreſs'd,

"From out that land where toils the captive
race,
Aaron, thy brother, comes to ſeek thy face;
Recite what I command—rebel no more,
And all thoſe ſigns perform on Egypt's ſhore;
Obey my voice, and take thy rod in hand,
And haſte obedient to the Memphian land."
God ſpake, and ceas'd!—wrapt in the flame
he flew,
And vaniſh'd from the trembling ſhepherd's view;
With thoughts confus'd, around and round he
he gaz'd,
And ſtood reclining on his crook amaz'd!
Revolving long the viſions of the day,
Then homeward thoughtful bent his ſpeedy way;
To diſobedience prone—our ſource of woe,
No hero to perfection ſhines below.
From Horeb's brow he drove his bleating ſheep,
A weary journey from the deſert ſteep;
At home arriv'd, his kindred, wife, and friends,
Obſerve his face ſome great event portends;
Around they throng, and liſt to what he ſaid,
Whilſt he the ſcene on Horeb's mount diſplay'd!

"Great wonders by my hand the LORD will ſhow,
When I to Egypt to my brethren go!"
Then anſwer'd Jethro, 'To thy land in peace
Return thou, and may Iſrael meet releaſe.'
Then Moſes haſtes, and takes his ſons and wife,
For God had ſaid—"They're dead which ſought thy life;
And when to Pharoah thou art come, thus ſay:
Send thou, my ſon, my firſt-born ſon, away."
Then Moſes journey'd on to Egypt's land,
And bore the ſacred rod of God in hand.

CANTO IV.

IN midnight hour, when fleeting viſions play,
And paint to view the airy ſcenes of day,
Th' ethereal ſpirit from the bleſt abode
Made known to Aaron the beheſts of God:
" Haſte thou, and go at early dawn of day,
And meet thy brother Moſes on his way;
O'er Horeb trav'lling from the Midian land,
By me commiſſion'd to th' Egyptian band;"
Then Aaron roſe, and wand'ring far abroad,
Eſpied him journeying by the mount of God.
Speechleſs they view'd each other's well-known face,
Then hid the ſtarting tear in fond embrace;

Words found at length, the joyful ſilence broke,
Thus to his brother, meek-ey'd Moſes ſpoke:
" When I from Pharoah's dreaded preſence fled,
To Midian's land my weary ſteps I ſped;
Reclining near a well, with ſorrows preſs'd,
Whilſt night mov'd onward in her ſable veſt;
A friendly prieſt, on gen'rous actions bent,
Came forth, and led me welcome to his tent:
As when fair Luna cheereth with her light
The trav'ller 'wilder'd in the ſhades of night,
So beamy pleaſure in my breaſt aroſe,
And baniſh'd preſent ſenſe of bitter woes:
I ſerv'd him long and true, devoid of ſtrife,
And he his daughter gave to be my wife.
Theſe are my ſons, I ſaid, when they were born
I ſhould no more a ſtranger roam forlorn;
Behold! God hath with theſe my exile grac'd,
When thus preſented—round the friends
embrac'd."
The ties which nature feels, unite
In perfect ſtate the ſons of light;
Fraternal friendſhip to the heart
A taſte of ſeraph's joys impart;

Down from the ſkies the ſov'reign balſam fell,
A mitigation where bleak ſorrows dwell.
At length their journey ſlowly they purſue,
And moving onward, thus the talk renew:
" I kept upon this mount old Jethro's ſheep,
The other ſide, half way, the deſert ſteep;
When, deeply muſing on my better fate,
What changes wait on man's uncertain ſtate;
The joys, the cares, attendant on his ways,
And at the beſt, how fleeting are his days;
Bright ſheets of fire, reflected from the skies,
Shone on the ground, and rais'd my dread ſurpriſe;
Forth from the flaming buſh a voice began,
Whilſt a cold ſhudd'ring through my boſom ran:
" I am the God who marks the oppreſſed's ſigh,
I've ſeen my people's ſorrows, heard their cry;
Come, let me ſend thee to th' Egyptian land,
To ſave my people from a tyrant's hand!"
I, fearful of the court's vindictive hate,
Was loath to go, leſt there I meet my fate;
The awful voice commanding, I obey'd,
And on the ground, amaz'd, this rod I laid.

Whilſt he the wond'rous act to Aaron ſhows,
To their aſtoniſh'd view a ſerpent roſe!
High from the ground his gloſſy creſt uprear'd,
His viſual orbs with burning fury glar'd;
Swift from his reach th' affrighted man recedes,
As o'er the ground the hiſſing monſter glides;
Long time eluding touch, he roll'd in vain,
When Moſes caught his rod transform'd again.
Conviction now impreſs'd on Aaron's mind,
T' obey th' Almighty will he thus inclin'd:
'Hence I from Goſhen, where the wretched ſighs,
Where toiling ſlaves to daily labour riſe;
Bid by ſome ſpirit, whilſt in ſleep's embrace,
To journey eaſtward till I met thy face;
I roſe, obedient to the ſov'reign will,
And lo! I've met thee journeying o'er this hill.
Onward to Goſhen firſt we'll bend our way,
And all thoſe ſigns to Iſrael's ſight diſplay.'
This ſaid, they haſten on to Goſhen's land,
And Moſes bore the ſacred rod in hand.
At length arriv'd, on Pithom's plain they trod,
And ſpoke to Iſrael all the words of God:

" In ſpite of foes, to all the cities ſend,
And bid the elders of the tribes attend."
This done, with haſte forth ruſh'd the captive race,
And round the men with eager wonder preſs.
The Hebrews felt the force of words divine,
As they diſclos'd th' Almighty's great deſign;
The prophets next thoſe wond'rous ſigns diſplay,
And ſmote their taunting foes with dread diſmay.
Then joyful Iſrael bow'd with one accord,
And paid due worſhip to their ſov'reign LORD.
Th' Eternal King, whoſe mighty ſway extends
O'er all whoſe voice th' immortal region rends,
Whilſt the bright ſons of light attend the ſound,
And wait obedient th' Empyrean round.
The aſſembly ſacred in the bleſt abode,
In ſhining ranks ſurround the throne of God;
Ten thouſand azure pinions ruſh along
From lower ſkies, and paus'd the heav'nly ſong!
Dread ſilence reign'd—more vivid glory ſpread
From forth the throne, and o'er celeſtials ſhed
The floods of light, which wide-expanding flow
Down on the worlds, and brighten all below.

Their ſilver wings outſtretch'd, the radiant race
Before magnific beauty veil'd their face;
Fearful in majeſty, th' Almighty ſat,
T' unfold the great import of Iſrael's fate;
And when th' Eternal Sire his council ſpoke,
Dread echo from th' ethereal concave broke,
And rang along the ſpheres—the ſpheres around
In cadence exquiſite again reſound!
" Spirit of wiſdom, with thy potent fire,
Refine my prophet, and his ſoul inſpire;
Diſcloſe my will, and teach him to obey,
Fearleſs of mortals, ſteady in my way:"
God ſpake—all heav'n return the loud applauſe,
Intent on juſtice in the Hebrews' cauſe.

When florid morn her charms unfold,
To tinge the eaſtern main with gold,
And down the ſky her banners play,
To uſher in the roſy day;

The wond'rous news to Pharoah's palace flies,
Soon as the king unclos'd his ſlumb'ring eyes;
Regardleſs he of ſuch a vain report,
Till Moſes ſtood, and thus beſpoke the court:

(Diviner influence beaming from his eyes,
Thus ſpake the man, and pointed to the ſkies:)
" The GOD on high, whoſe univerſal ſway
Props the wide globe, and lightens up the day;
To whoſe creating pow'r all things belong,
Who 'points its taſk to yon obedient ſun;
That GOD has ſent me here, who bids me ſay,
Send thou my ſon, my firſt-born ſon away;
Iſrael is mine, nor dare vain man controul
The ſov'reign will which bids the planets roll."
This ſaid, he paus'd, and waited a reply,
Whilſt rage aroſe, and fix'd the monarch's eye.
' Who is the Lord, (the haughty king rejoin'd)
Who is the Lord, that counteracts my mind?
Behold, I know him not, nor will I know,
Or let the idle tribes of Iſrael go.
No more ſhall ſtraw for Iſrael's uſe be found,
For tales of brick enough is ſcatter'd round;
Nor yet ſhall ye their daily work diminiſh,
But ſcourge them till the double task they finiſh.'
This ſaid—while black revenge his boſom fir'd,
Up roſe the monarch, and in wrath retir'd.

Mean time the hard decrees to Goſhen fly,
And to their God the wretched captives cry;
Forth from their tents, by ſons of violence drove,
Wide o'er the plains for needful ſtraw they rove;
And yet their daily works they muſt fulfil,
And haſte obedient to the tyrant's will.
The elders of the tribes to Pharoah go,
And plead (in vain) he would relief beſtow:
The monarch heard, and ſtood with pride elate,
With frowns relentleſs, harden'd to their fate.
Forth went the Hebrews, at the ſtern command,
And wander'd ſorrowing to Goſhen's land;
Oppreſs'd with cares the penſive elders ſtray,
When Moſes came and met them on their way.
At ſight of him indignant wrath aroſe,
And to his cauſe they laid increaſe of woes:
" Behold! (they cried) the wretched Iſrael's fate,
Doom'd to be ſlaves to foes' vindictive hate;
Doom'd with the ſmarting ſcourge to early graves,
Our infants plung'd in the devouring waves.
The God on high be judge of this your deed,
'Tis for this cauſe the wretched Hebrews bleed."

Then on with furious ſtep the elders trod,
And Moſes' anguiſh reach'd the throne of God.
Now whilſt he muſing ſtood, the heavens unfold,
And o'er his head a ruſhing whirlwind roll'd!
Tremendous ſounds th' Almighty's will diſcloſe,
Attent he ſtood, and huſh'd to peace his woes:
"I am thy GOD! (the awful voice begun)
And when I ſpeak, my will on earth is done;
I am thy GOD! miſtruſteſt thou my pow'r
Who only brings to paſs th' eventful hour?
Whoſe way is darkneſs in the pathleſs deep,
Nor can ye know the traces of my feet.
Lo! in my hand the dark decrees are ſeal'd
Of mortals' fate, nor ſhall it be reveal'd:
Man from the duſt I made—myſelf to know,
What fits him beſt for future I beſtow.
Speak peace to Iſrael—my commands obey—
And dreadful ruin ſhall your foes repay!"
Then ceas'd the voice—celeſtial cadence mild,
All nature bloom'd, and heav'n ſerenely ſmil'd.
Myriads of heralds wait with ſpreading wings,
Whilſt thro' their ranks th' Eternal's pleaſure rings:

" Go, ſacred ſpirit! bear thy GOD's beheſt,
And with thy pow'r pervade my prophet's breaſt."
Forth from the heav'n of heav'ns the ſpirit flies
Thro' æther pure, expanding from the skies;
The ſacred influence touch'd the prophet's ſoul,
Beam'd from his eyes, and o'er his boſom ſtole.
Forth to the tribes on Goſhen's plains he trod,
And ſpoke as actuated by his God:
His words in vain the ſoothing hopes beſtow,
Their hearts were harden'd by exceſs of woe.

CANTO V.

TWICE forty ſummers' ſuns their circuit ſped,
Swept on their courſe thro' heav'n's high vault, and fled,
Since Moſes bleſs'd his ſire's paternal ſight,
And op'd his infant eyes, to gaze on light.
Twice forty years and three his brother told,
Which ſwiftly fled, as nightly viſions roll'd:
Her virtuous love Eliſheba beſtows,
In Aaron's breaſt the mutual paſſion glows;
In bands of wedded ſtate the pair unite,
And duteous children bring them new delight.
Meanwhile the day arriv'd, nam'd by that Pow'r
Which wiſely fixes each eventful hour;

Moſes and Aaron, heedleſs of repoſe,
From deep communion, with the dawn uproſe;
Their boſoms lab'ring with the vaſt deſign,
Forth went the men, complete in ſchemes divine.
Arriv'd at court, where wait the brilliant band,
They ſoon in angry Pharoah's preſence ſtand;
Unaw'd by wrath, they keep their ſteady ground,
The circling train the dauntleſs men ſurround.
The heav'nly gueſt o'er Moſes' boſom ſtole,
And actuates the paſſions of his ſoul:
" To thee, oh! king, (the prophet thus began)
To thee, oh! king, who art but erring man,
The GOD of heav'n, on whom thy throne depends,
For Iſrael's peace, by me his meſſage ſends.
Three days we go, and in the deſert raiſe
The ſacred altars to th' Almighty's praiſe;
Three days the firſtlings of the flock ſhall bleed,
Which now neglected thro' the vallies feed;
Leſt GOD in wrath his dread deſtruction ſhow'r,
And thou at laſt, conſtrain'd, ſhalt own his pow'r."
' Haſt thou a ſign, (retorts the haughty king)
To gain belief on this preſumptuous thing?'

To Aaron then the favour'd prophet cries,
" Caſt down thy rod, and bid a ſerpent riſe!"
Swift he obey'd—and high the monſter rear'd;
The king and court with dread amazement ſtar'd!
' Speed the magicians near,' the monarch cried,
Then ſtood at diſtance, wrapt in ſullen pride;
The men, obedient to the ſtern command,
Appear'd, and bore their magic wands in hand.
Meanwhile the prince of air extends his wing,
And climes of darkneſs with applauſes ring;
Outrageous joy, as ſpoke the rebel foe,
Shook the dark caverns of the realms below.
" To counteract th' Eternal Father's grace,
In labour'd miſchiefs to the favour'd race,
Go, Belial, with thy pow'r, ſatannic ſway,
And Egypt ſhall thy influence obey;
Weave thou with latent art th' enchanter's ſpell,
And give the triumphs to the prieſts of hell."
He ſpake—and ſwift as thought the demon flew,
From inmoſt hell, inviſible to view;
Stood with the ſorc'rers, as they wav'd their rod,
And mock'd the prophets of the Hebrews' God.

Aſſembled thus, whilſt each expectant eye
Gaz'd on in ſilence, Pharoah ſtanding by,
O'er magic rods the ghaſtly wizard band,
Thrice mutt'ring, ſolemn wav'd their ebon wand;
When lo! unnumber'd monſters, rearing high!
Back ſpring the courtiers, trembling as they fly.
Then Aaron's ſerpent, with terrific guiſe,
Uprear'd his creſt, and flaſh'd his burning eyes,
His forky tongue diſtended jaws diſcloſe,
And threatens venom to ſurrounding foes;
Then darting ſudden on the hiſſing train,
Swallows them up, and ſtands alone again!
When writhing round, and ſwiftly gliding on,
His gloſſy ſkin in varied colours ſhone;
The prophet ſtretch'd his hand, and caught his rod,
Influenc'd by the Spirit of his God.
Aghaſt they ſtand! each eye with dire amaze,
In wond'ring ſilence on each other gaze;
The ſtubborn king vouchſaf'd no longer ſtay,
Th' infernal ſpirit raging fled away.
Now night with haſty ſteps her curtains ſpread,
And cloth'd in ſhades old ocean's ſurgy bed;

All nature's eye ſeal'd up in ſoft repoſe,
Except the wretched, wakeful to their woes.
When morn each flow'r with dewy luſtre fills,
The cheering ſun aroſe o'er eaſtern hills;
In brighteſt glory his enliv'ning beams
Shoot o'er the glebe, and kiſs the paſſing ſtreams.
With early the favour'd prophet roſe,
T' obey the will made known in night's repoſe:
" Ariſe, for lo! th' Egyptian monarch ſtrays,
Where circling Nilus thro' the meadow plays;
On the green bank, where refluent beats the tide,
And rumbling onwards, down their channels glide.
If ſtill, refuſing mercy to th' oppreſt,
He ſcorn with furious pride the juſt requeſt;
Stretch forth thy rod above the rolling flood,
And o'er the land—I'll turn it into blood!"
This ſaid—th' obedient prophets haſty roſe,
And took their way where Nile redundant flows;
There walks the king, when ſofter breezes riſe,
And beamy azure brightens o'er the ſkies;
Embolden'd by their God, the prophets ſtand,
And Aaron bore the ſacred rod in hand;

Then thus he ſpoke, and when his words began,
The haughty monarch ey'd the fearleſs man:
" Again to thee, oh! king, I make requeſt,
Again to thee declare our GOD's beheſt;
Whoſe arm at firſt the wat'ry ſtores unfurl'd,
And o'er the earth the deluge-ruin hurl'd;
His mandate's giv'n that thou let Iſrael go,
Or thro' thy land the bloody ſtreams ſhall flow."
Stubborn the monarch ſtood, nor deign'd reply,
But dubious waits th' event with curious eye.
As on the river's brink the prophets ſtand,
O'er the wide waters Aaron ſtretch'd his wand;
Aw'd by the pow'r of GOD, the conſcious flood
In wavy circles thicken'd into blood!
Swift o'er the land the ruddy waters flow,
And Egypt's ſons lament th' uncommon woe.
The wond'ring throng ſurvey the mighty deed,
For the clear ſtreams no more ſupply their need;
No more meandring Nile's pellucid wave
The moſſy banks and verdant foliage lave;
No more, loud-roaring from the rocky ſteep,
The ruſhing waters down their channels ſweep,

Or gently trickling down their oozy way,
To neighb'ring lucid riv'lets murm'ring ſtray;
Where thirſty hinds, ſtretch'd forward at full
length,
Imbibe refection, and renew their ſtrength;
Wide o'er the plains faſt ruſh'd the purple gore,
And ſpread the horrid ſcene from ſhore to ſhore.
The ſcaly tribes, in wanton play,
No longer ſkim their watry way;
And diſemboguing Nile o'erflows
The verdant blooms which ſpring beſtows;
The crimſon billows ſweep the fields around,
Foam o'er its banks, and roar along the ground.
The wrathful king, encircled by the throng,
With fury frowning, bade the men be gone;
The heav'nly pow'r reſtrain'd the deathful hand,
And guards the prophets ſafe to Goſhen's land;
Where pointing to the tribes the wond'rous deed,
He finds them water to ſupply their need.

CANTO VI.

NOW the eighth morn unfolds her bloomy veſt,
And night's dark ſhades ſwept onward down the weſt,
Swift, at th' Almighty word, th' ethereal band
Viewleſs around the Hebrews' dwelling ſtand;
The ſacred gueſts celeſtify the dome,
Nor dare a foe invade the peaceful home:
Hell was enrag'd, but Heav'n the rage controuls,
Whilſt dreadful vengeance o'er the guilty rolls.
Inſpir'd! again the prophets ſpeed to court,
And to the king their GOD's decrees report;
In vain they ſpoke, the monarch ſtill denies,
And to their ſuit vouchſaf'd no more replies.

The favour'd man his brother thus addreſs'd,
And ſpake the tidings on his ſoul impreſs'd:
" O'er the wide waters ſtretch thy ſacred rod,
And frogs ſhall riſe from forth the putrid flood."
His rod he ſtretch'd—the teeming waters roar,
Forth ſprung the frogs, and cover'd all the ſhore!
The croaking army thro' the nation ſpread,
Sat on their board, and plagu'd them in their bed.
A troop of frogs thro' Pharoah's palace ſpring,
Inſenſible to grandeur, court, or king;
In cloſets, where the choiceſt viands lay,
The ſqualid caitiffs riot all the day.
Where'er th' extended boards are crown'd,
No ſong or ſocial joys abound;
If Bacchanalian rites preſide,
Whole legions in the goblets glide;
Wide o'er the land deſtructive horrors ſpread,
And peſtilential fumes pernicious ſhed.
The monarch felt high Heav'n's avenging hand,
And heard the murmurs thro' the Memphian land;
He heard, and inly griev'd, thus forc'd to bend,
And bade the prophets at the court attend.

Elate with hope, the ſummons they obey,
And viewleſs guards protect their dang'rous way;
The fearleſs Moſes mov'd ſedately on,
Attent on thought, nor heeds the gazing throng;
Wide flew the portal, by the king's command,
And inſtantly they in his preſence ſtand.
The monarch check'd the wrath within his breaſt,
And fraudful thus the patient man addreſs'd:
" Behold the ſorrows which my people bear,
Intreat thy GOD this ruin to repair;
I yield to thy requeſt, let Iſrael go,
But thou remove from hence this mighty woe."
Propitious now to what ſo long denied,
With well-wrought praiſe the prophet thus replied:
' Be thine this honour, that thou wilt agree
To ſet the wretched captive Hebrews free;
To-morrow's dawn I will my GOD implore,
And all thoſe plagues ſhall vaniſh from thy ſhore;
And may thy princely pow'r our cauſe befriend,
As thro' the wild our humble ſteps we bend;
Then ſhall our GOD with bleſſings grace thy reign,
And all th' enfeebl'd wrath of hell reſtrain."

No more he ſaid—but from the court repairs,
And heav'nward lifts his eyes in ardent pray'rs;
Heav'n deign'd to hear, and from th' Eternal's throne,
The Spirit flies, to make his pleaſure known.
From houſe and palace, from the bed and board,
The frogs fall breathleſs at the ſov'reign word;
Delightful pleaſure in their boſoms roſe,
To view the death of all their pigmy foes;
All hands employ'd, in heaps they lay the ſlain,
And ſcrape them up from village, field, and plain;
Thro' all the land the noxious fumes ariſe,
Diſtreſs their ſenſes, and offend their eyes.
A reſpite gain'd, they ſoon forgat the woe,
Nor promis'd freedom on the tribes beſtow;
Within each breaſt aroſe their former pride,
They ſcorn the GOD, and Heav'n's high pow'rs deride:
In vain deride—Heav'n's pow'rs the plagues renew,
And hurl wild ruin on th' inſenſate crew.
So ſhall each rebel to divine commands
Bear the terrific preſſure of his hands.

Swift from above the Sov'reign pleaſure flies
In midnight hour, to bid the prophets riſe:
" To-morrow's dawn bid Aaron ſtretch his wand,
And ſmite the flying duſt in Egypt's land;
The flying duſt to crawling lice ſhall turn,
And man and beaſt the dreadful woe ſhall mourn."
Soon as Aurora ſwept the ſhades away,
And to her chariot led majeſtic day,
Up roſe the prophets, whilſt in Moſes' breaſt
The heav'nly Pow'r diſclos'd his GOD's beheſt.
Along the dewy track they ſped their way,
Whilſt onward ſmiling ſhone the ruby day;
Now far behind the Hebrews' dwellings ſtood,
And Moſes walk'd beſide the ſwelling flood.
Soon as the northern wind the duſt upbore,
Which floating high, flew diſtant from the ſhore,
" Stretch forth thy rod, (the prophet haſty cries)
And ſmite the duſt, as o'er the land it flies."
Aaron obeys, on man and beaſt they fall,
On man and beaſt the living vermin crawl.
Whole legions traverſe round the monarch's globe,
And prance unnumber'd o'er his limbs and robe;

Nought can avail the courtier's ſtately pride,
The nauſeous inſects on their limbs abide;
O'er wiſeſt heads whole troops in order ſtroll,
And in an inſtant ſkip from poll to poll.*
In vain each day they clean and rince ſo nice,
Each day flies duſt, replacing breathleſs lice.
Thick as th' elaſtic hail which ſweeps the ground,
The crawling inſects o'er the heads abound.
Tortur'd with pain, the raging maſtiffs roar,
And Egypt's ſons the keen-felt plague deplore;
Th' unruly cattle bellow with the ſting,
And o'er the plains with furious madneſs fling.
The magi ſaw the wondrous pow'r of God,
And own'd the juſtice of th' avenging rod;
The king relentleſs, harden'd to the woe,
Refuſeth ſtubborn to let Iſrael go.

Meanwhile the buſy Hebrews regulate
Confus'd affairs, and wait their better fate:
The tribes their ancient pedigree produce,
And bring it careful for the prophet's uſe.

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* Of the head.

When any of a tribe is born or dies,
The learned man the lineage mark applies;
Proceeding as a judge amid the throng,
He heals each grievance, and amends each wrong;
Belov'd by all, and dreaded by each foe,
Leſt ſome dire fate his potent hand beſtow.
For well they know th' Eternal Father hears
The prophet's pray'r, and vengeance ſwift appears;
Yet would th' Egyptians ſeize again their prey,
Whilſt ſcourge and torture bid the ſlaves obey.
Again when o'er the airy lawn,
The floating veſt of eve is drawn,
Th' unſlumb'ring Pow'r thro' gloom deſcends,
And to his prophets' pray'r attends.
"To all the woes I doom on Egypt's pride,
Thou ſhalt be witneſs; (the Almighty cried)
When the next morn her early charms diſcloſe,
The monarch ſtrays where Nile redundant flows;
There ſpeed thy ſteps, I'll guard thee on thy way,
Speak thou to Pharoah all I bid thee ſay."
Moſes attent, the heav'nly voice obeys,
And with his brother by the river ſtrays.

Forth came the monarch, with attendant train,
And eyed the dreaded prophets with diſdain.
"To thee, again, oh! Pharoah, (Moſes cried)
I make requeſt, nor let me be denied!
Thus ſaith my God—Let captive Iſrael go,
Or dire deſtruction I'll on thee beſtow:
In formidable clouds devouring flies,
In houſe and field, throughout the land ſhall riſe;
Iſrael, exempted from the ſwarming tribe,
Shall own my power, and confound thy pride.
When next the ſun his golden axle laves,
And peeps refulgent from the azure waves,
This thing ſhall be, and thou that God ſhalt know,
Whoſe potent arm inflicts the grievous woe."
He ſaid, and ceas'd—but ere his wrath aroſe,
He left the king, inſenſate, to repoſe.

When the next morn, in early beauty dreſt,
Beam'd o'er the heav'ns, in blue and ſilver veſt,
The favour'd men from Goſhen ſped their way,
As Sol refulgent ſhot his glowing ray;
His glowing ray ſalutes the teeming air,
And clouds of flies the burden'd breezes bear.

Like the bleak ſnow, which ſcatter'd by the blaſt,
Houſe, field, and plain, ſeem one wide diſmal waſte;
So ruſh'd with buzzing wing the airy train,
And fill'd each houſe, each village, field, and plain!
The darken'd air, corrupt by flying foes,
No more its life-reviving pow'r beſtows;
The boſoms, panting for refection due,
Draw in with ſtagnant air the vagrant crew;
Whoſe ſharpen'd ſting inflames each viſual ray,
And ſhrouds with ſable wing the vivid day.
The ſons of Iſrael from laborious woes
A reſpite gain, whilſt plagues oppreſs their foes;
No ſwarming tribes their peaceful homes invade,
But joy and wonder every breaſt pervade;
From ſhore to ſhore wild devaſtation trod,
And Egypt fears the Hebrews' angry God.
The humbled king before his council ſate,
And mourn'd the horrors which o'erwhelm'd the ſtate;
His mandate giv'n, with ſlow reluctant hand,
To bid the prophets haſte from Goſhen's land,

The herald flies, with words of great import,
To call the men to the imperial court.
The prophets heard, but, dubious, hope ſuppreſt,
And ſpeed their way obſervant of requeſt.
Before the council Moſes ſoon appears,
Where ſat the king, ſurrounded by his peers;
The ſapient prophet look'd ſedately on,
And ſilent ſtood, whilſt Pharoah thus began:
" Thoſe dreadful woes which ſpread from ſhore
to ſhore,
I and my people can endure no more;
Then let the Hebrews in this land ariſe,
And altars build, to burn their ſacrifice;
The ſmoking incenſe ſhall their GOD appeaſe,
And all theſe horrors from this land ſhall ceaſe;
Their toils remitted, free from ev'ry care,
They may with us the good of Egypt ſhare."
He ſaid—and looks with hope they would comply,
Waiting expectant of the men's reply.
' Not ſo, (the prophet cried) not in this land,
But in the wild, imports our GOD's command;
Our horned kine, which to our GOD we ſlay,
Ye make your gods, to whom for aid ye pray.

Lo! impotent to ſave, they pow'rleſs ſtand,
Whilſt horrid plagues deſtroy their ſuppliant's land;
If here our oxen's blood our GOD aſſuage,
Ourſelves fall victims to thy people's rage."
Then thus the king—" I yield to thy deſires,
If this alone the Hebrews' GOD requires;
Haſte thou, remove this dreadful plague away,
But far from Egypt Iſrael ſhall not ſtray."
' Affianc'd in thy word, (the prophet cries)
Thoſe woes no more ſhall o'er thy land ariſe;
Let not the king deceit again impart,
Our GOD alone pervades the ſecret heart.'
He ſpake—and turning from the regal dome,
Attends, well-pleas'd, th' impatient Hebrews' home;
From prying eyes in ſecret he repairs,
In midnight hour, to heav'n he ſends his pray'rs,
When morn again relucent from her bed,
Vivific roſe, and dewy odours ſhed,
Thoſe flies deſtructive vaniſh'd from the ſhore,
And thro' the land they could be found no more.

The plague remov'd, the harden'd monarch frown'd
Relentleſs pride, nor heeds the blaſted ground;
So, when emerging from a ſea of woes,
We ſcorn the mercy which relief beſtows—
The Almighty Pow'r, the guardian of the juſt,
Defies the wrathful impotence of duſt.

CANTO VII.

NOW through the regions of immortal light
Cherubic myriads wing their airy flight,
Attendant on the Spirit from the throne,
To make th' Eternal's ſov'reign pleaſure known;
Viewleſs around the men they take their ſtand,
Or hov'ring heav'n-ward wait their GOD's command.
Swift ſpeeds th' obedient prophets, at the word,
And to the king again their ſuit preferr'd:
Thus ſaith our God, "If ſtill thou wilt deny,
And ſcorn with pride the Pow'r who rules on high,
To-morrow's dawn deſtructive plagues ſhall fly,
Smote with the murrain, all thy cattle die."

The men indignant, more refrain'd to ſay,
But to Rameſes thoughtful ſpeed their way.
Ere radiant morn in eaſtern concave roſe,
The putrid breezes peſtilence diſcloſe;
The victim's dying moans at diſtance ſound,
And heaps of dead o'er all the land are found;
In Zoan's field, where flocks were wont to ſtray,
Or gameſome feed along the verdant way,
They breathleſs lie, thick o'er the faded plains,
And death victorious o'er the region reigns.
No more the boards with fatten'd cates abound,
To feaſt luxurious with compeers around;
The toiling beaſts beneath their burdens die,
A prey to death the noble victims lie;
No more th' oblations on their altars ſmoke,
Or rites prophane their imag'd gods invoke;
Which rang'd in order, round their temples ſhine,
A god and goddeſs of the horned kine:
A deity for ev'ry good aſſign'd,
Each care t' avert which clouds the human mind;
Oſiris firſt, and Iſis ſtand in ſtate,
Attaching good or ill to mortals' fate;

Provided thus, the ſons of Ham diſdain
The mighty GOD who thunders o'er the main.
This paſt—their policy regains ſupply,
From neighb'ring ſtates, and Iſrael's pray'rs deny.
Now fix'd in heav'n a deathful day,
Hell ſtretches wide to ſeize her prey;
Brigades of angels ſweep below,
With flaming lance to ſmite the foe:
GOD ſpake—from his bright throne the ſpirit flies,
And ſwift precedes the ſquadrons down the ſkies.
Stole in the boſom of the favour'd man,
And through his mind the inſpiration ran.
The Sov'reign will reveal'd, the prophets go,
With deep intent to raiſe another woe;
Within the furnace where the aſhes lay,
A handful ſeiz'd, toward the court they ſtray;
Soon as the king the dauntleſs men deſcry,
Whirl'd high in air the hoary aſhes fly;
The hoary aſhes Pharoah ſaw with dread,
Upborne by air, and flying round his head!
So when a flaming meteor ſkims the sky,
The gazing throng portend ſome ruin nigh.

This executed—they again return,
Whilſt fear and rage in Pharoah's boſom burn;
Diſeaſe and death throughout the nation fly,
And throbbing anguiſh wrings the plaintive cry;
Blotches and blains on ev'ry frame aroſe,
And ſwell each breaſt with ſenſe of fatal woes.
The mighty men in vain their idols truſt,
Helpleſs they fall, and mingle with the duſt;
Jannes and Jambres, of the magic band,
Could not again before the monarch ſtand;
Smote with the plague, their wands lie uſeleſs by,
Their wretched owners loathing ſad to die.
Lo! when a bull the furious maſtiffs rein,
He ſtruggles bellowing, madden'd by the pain;
All-conquering death ſtalks on in diſmal ſtate,
And on his jav'lin bears each wretch's fate.
Domeſtic peace from ev'ry houſe is fled,
Fill'd with the cries of mourners for the dead!
Around their fire the weeping children throng,
Whilſt death's cold dew upon his eye-lids hung;
The frantic wife ſupports his drooping head,
Herſelf ſoon number'd with the num'rous dead.

In vain the clamours rung from ſhore to ſhore,
Th' inſenſate king heeds not the nation's roar;
Stubborn to counſel, harden'd to the woe,
Refuſing ſtill to let the Hebrews go.

Now ſtretch'd in wrath, JEHOVAH's potent arm
Prepares freſh ruin, and commands the ſtorm!
Th' Eternal's throne the ſons of light ſurround,
And ſongs of joy the heav'ns reſponſive ſound;
Commiſſion'd—through th' immeaſurable way
The ſeraph ſhot, refulgent as the day.
Sudden he ſtood diſclos'd to Moſes' ſight,
And thus beſpoke him in a cloud of light!
Familiariz'd to viſits from the sky,
The prophet ſtood, nor lifts his dazzled eye.
Attent, whilſt thus his glorious gueſt begun,
Ethereal muſic flowing from his tongue:
" The words I ſpeak to Egypt's king diſcloſe;
Say, my right hand ſhall cruſh my people's foes—
Say, for this cauſe I rais'd thee to the throne,
In very deed to make my wonders known.
Uncommon plagues thy nation ſhall devour,
Nor ſhall the gods you worſhip 'ſcape my pow'r;

Exalteſt thou thy thyſelf againſt my will,
Proudly preſumptuous wilt thou ſcorn me ſtill?
Now will I ſtretch my hand, and at one blow
Thy pending fate in horrid guiſe beſtow.
Behold! to-morrow, at this time of day,
(The howling tempeſts my beheſts obey)
A grievous ſtorm throughout thy land ſhall roar,
Such as on earth hath never been before;
Let thoſe who fear my words, to ſhelter fly,
For man and beaſt, on whom it falls, ſhall die!
When lucid morning ſpreads her roſy wing,
Go thou, and ſeek the preſence of the king;
Then heav'n-ward ſtretch thy rod, thou ſhalt
prevail,
And thund'ring down ſhall ruſh th' impetuous
hail."
He ſaid no more, but vaniſh'd from the ſight,
Wing'd rapid on, and ſprung to realms of light.
The men, obedient to the dread command,
Haſted to court, and bore the rod in hand;
Encompaſs'd by his train, the monarch ſate,
A radiant circlet grac'd the throne of ſtate;

The prophet came, preluding other woes,
And from his tongue the inſpiration flows:
" Shall thoſe dire plagues in vain infeſt thy ſhore,
And Hebrews ſtill thy heavy yoke deplore?
Is my hand ſhorten'd, that it cannot ſave
My choſen tribes from an untimely grave?
Behold! to-morrow, when I ſtretch my rod,
Down flows the vengeance of an angry God!
The dreadful hail ſhall lay thy nation waſte,
With intermingled fire a horrid blaſt."
He ſpake in vain—the harden'd king denies,
The prophets' threat'ning through the city flies;
Then Egypt's ſons, who fear'd the Hebrews' God,
Drove all their cattle to ſecure abode;
They and their fam'lies in their houſe abide,
And, trembling, mourn their monarch's ſtubborn pride.
Now red with wrath the light'nings fly,
And hail-ſtones load the burden'd ſky;
The ſeraphs now the winds unbind,
Th' impatient thunders unconfin'd:
Await the awful word, prepar'd to play,
And roar tremendous down th' aërial way.

CANTO VIII.

WHEN the next ſun o'er the pellucid vaſt
Meridian ſtood, with noon-tide beauty grac'd,
The glorious heav'ns in ſplendid azure ſhone,
Prone to deceive with ſmiles the heedleſs throng;
Who baſking careleſs in the ſummer ray,
Their flocks unheeded thro' the paſtures ſtray;
Harden'd to fate, and ſiding with their king,
They walk abroad, and mark the fruitful ſpring.
Sudden the prophet ſtretch'd his rod on high,
And beamy beauty vaniſh'd from the ſky;
Impenetrable glooms, in frowning ſtate,
Join in one vaſt, big with impending fate;
O'er the wide heav'ns portentous darkneſs roll,
And forky lightnings ſhoot from pole to pole!

Loud craſh the thunders—through the height profound
Repeated roars, tremendous peals, reſound!
Sheets of ſulphureous flame enwrap the ſkies,
And earth's foundations ſhake with dread ſurpriſe!
The pond'rous hail, impetuous from on high,
Down ruſhing ſudden, rais'd a gen'ral cry;
High from the earth the weighty ſtones rebound,
Blue flames vivific ſweep the blaſted ground;
Th' Almighty warrior, with a dreadful ſtroke,
Rent the wide heav'ns, and from his temple broke;
Uprais'd the whirlwind with his wrathful nod,
And down the limits of the sky he rode;
Directing the dread ſtorm, and with his breath
Enkindling fire and peſtilential death;
Raiſing the flood-gates of his deep domain,
Down ſwept the deluge with avengeful train.
Tempeſtuous torrents join the gen'ral roar,
And on its weighty wave the dead upbore;
Bleak Boreas join'd the elemental fray,
Tore up the trees, and flung them far away;

The ſturdy oak, though ſtubborn to its ground,
Wrench'd from its roots in fragments laid around;
Level with earth the finiſh'd buildings lie,
Beneath whoſe ruin the rebellious die;
Heav'n's righteous deed the dying wretches own,
And haughty Pharoah trembles on his throne;
But vainly now thoſe dreadful ſtorms deplore,
And deprecate the elemental roar.
Wrath and repentance in his troubled ſoul
Alternate ſway, and all his pow'rs controul;
Whilſt with redoubled rage the ſtorms reſound,
Howl thro' the air, and beat the blaſted ground:
The bleating ſheep, which find no ſhelter nigh,
Smote by the hail, in breathleſs numbers lie.
Horrid the ſcene! appall'd the monarch view'd,
Mourn'd the wild havock, and repentant ſtood;
Then paus'd the ſtorm—ſwift, by the king's command,
The meſſage flies to Goſhen's peaceful land;
Exempted there, no plagues infeſt the ſhore,
Alone ſecure they heard the thunders roar.

Swift came the prophets, on expectant wing,
A welcome viſit to the troubled king:
" Intreat thy God, (the monarch thus beſpoke)
Intreat thy God theſe evils to revoke;
Let not thoſe mighty thund'rings rend the ſky,
And vivid lightnings thro' the nation fly;
Forbear to let thoſe wond'rous hailſtones flow,
And I will freedom on the tribes beſtow."
' 'Tis right (the man replied) thou ſhould'ſt
relent,
Thy people faint, in deathful horrors ſpent;
The mighty GOD, with whom thou wouldſt con-
tend,
With puniſhments ſevere his mercies blend;
Behold! thy life is giv'n—and thou no more
(Our GOD obey'd) thoſe mis'ries ſhalt deplore;
Then let thy princely meed our ſorrows cheer,
As thro' the wild our pious ſteps we ſteer.'
He ſaid—and ſent his great requeſt on high,
The God of vengeance lays his lightnings by;
Arreſts the ſtorm—the thunders ceaſe to roar,
The clouds flew off—the ſkies freſh beauty wore;

Forth broke the ſun—the king forgets the woe,
Refuſing ſtill to let the Hebrews go.
So when diſaſtrous ſorrows riſe,
We ſupplicate auſpicious ſkies;
But when ſoft mercy ſmiles again,
The rebel breaſt forgets the pain.
Whilſt latent vengeance waits the word, to ſhed
Deſtructive horrors on the ungrateful head;
Harden'd to fate, the monarch and his train
The Hebrew tribes in bondage yet detain.
Again, celeſtial from the higheſt ſphere,
The Sov'reign voice ſalutes the prophet's ear;
Swept the indignant paſſions from his ſoul,
And o'er his breaſt a ſacred calmneſs ſtole:
" To endleſs years thoſe wonders ſhall be told,
Within the page of deathleſs fame enroll'd;
For ſtubborn man forbids his Maker's ſway,
Refuſe my worſhip, nor my words obey.
Amid thoſe plagues they to their idols fly,
As willing ſtrangers to the GOD on high.
Then haſte again to court, and thus reply,
Vain is the hand that wars againſt the ſky."

Then roſe the men, with heav'nly influence fir'd,
The ſacred Spirit all their ſouls inſpir'd;
To Pharoah's train diſclos'd their God's beheſt,
More ills preſaging fill each courtier's breaſt;
Boldly the prophet ſpoke—the monarch hears,
But in his breaſt compreſs'd the riſing fears:
" To-morrow will I bring o'er all this coaſt,
With vengeance fraught, a formidable hoſt;
Devouring locuſts o'er thy land ſhall reign,
Thick as the hoar froſt—famine in their train."
He ſaid no more—protected by his God,
His ſteps indignant o'er the threſhold trod.

In Pharoah's breaſt conflicting paſſions roſe,
And thoughts intruſive paint ſeverer woes;
At length th' attendant band long ſilence broke,
And boldly thus the muſing king beſpoke:
' How long ſhall we with horrors be annoy'd,
Know'ſt thou not yet that Egypt is deſtroy'd?
Another plague, and earth refrains to bear
Th' expected produce of th' enſuing year!
Avert the doom, leſt all thy people die,
And fields and plains in one wide ruin lie.

Before the Hebrews' God we dare not ſtand,
For woes on woes o'erwhelm this wretched land;
Let Iſrael go'—th' aſſenting king complies,
And at the word the royal meſſage flies.
The men return—the humbled king begun,
And thus beſpoke them with a fraudful tongue:
(Still loth to loſe the labours of the ſlaves,
To all they aſk his full conſent he waves)
" Ye that are men, your God's commands obey,
Nor let your wives and children tempt the way;
Secure with us in Goſhen's land remain
Your wives and babes, till you return again."
He thus evaſive—but the men deny,
And, rudely drove from Pharoah's court, they fly.
Now healing time had cheer'd the earth,
And ſpring came dancing to the birth
Of teeming nature's op'ning bloom,
Unfolding charms of rich perfume;
Each ſkilful hand the fertile glebe prepares,
With hopes of freedom from deſtructive cares.
Then ſtood the prophet with uplifted eyes,
Uprais'd his rod, and pointed to the ſkies!

Swift Gabriel flew, the eaſtern wind he bore,
And ſent it whiſtling thro' the Memphian ſhore;
When bright Aurora from her oozy bed
O'er the wide heavens her ſtreamy mantle ſpread,
The freſh'ning gales with gentler paſtime blew,
And ſailing on appear'd the hoſtile crew;
The leader in the van, of bulk more rare,
With num'rous ſquadrons tilting on the air.
Swift as the ruſhing blaſts tempeſtuous ſweep,
From north's bleak regions down th' aërial ſteep,
They pitch around, whilſt others, hov'ring high,
Endleſs in length, becloud the viewleſs sky.
No more the ſhrubb'ry ſmiles in rich perfume,
Or bearing trees in fruitful bloſſoms bloom;
No more the glebe its kindly herbage yields,
Nor the pied flow'rets ornament the fields;
The flax and barley, temper'd by the ſoil,
Bid fair to pay the ſlaves' laborious toil;
The all-devouring foes, with joyous wing,
Riot in blooming ſweets of early ſpring;
The tender wheat, ſafe hidden in the earth,
Protracts till later year her welcome birth;

Within each houſe the dreadful inſects flew,
Fearleſs of man—themſelves a conq'ring crew.
From place to place tumultuous clamours fly,
The reſtleſs monarch joins the bitter cry;
Inſtant the meſſage to the prophet flies,
Intreating, ſuppliant, with repentant cries:
" We are conſum'd! with ſpeed thy GOD implore,
This once forgive, and I will ſin no more."
The prophet pray'd—the awful Pow'r attends,
And from the weſt a warring whirlwind ſends.
When mantling night had ſhaded o'er the skies,
And ſhed ambroſial ſleep on mortal eyes,
The ruſhing whirlwind with a mighty ſweep
Upbore the foes, and whirl'd them in the deep;
When early morn diſpens'd her grateful dew,
Linger'd behind no vagrants of the crew.

CANTO IX.

THE ſynod call'd, the prince in regal ſtate
Join'd his high peers, and thus began debate:
"Thoſe woes which now our fruit and kine devour,
Are ſent by ſome malicious magick pow'r;
Shall we thoſe ſlaves with liberty repay,
And let them idly for their pleaſure ſtray?
On this pretence, t' obey their GOD's command,
By whom they ſay thoſe horrors plague our land:
Shall thoſe bright fanes we view with glad ſurpriſe,
Unfiniſh'd lie, nor to perfection riſe?
And ſhall thoſe ſlaves like conq'ring armies boaſt,
And quit in triumph our imperial coaſt?
It muſt not be."——Th' aſſenting peerage join'd,
Exclaiming loud, with one concurring mind,

'Command the ſwifteſt herald to convey,
Ordain'd in council, this our high decree;
Vengeance the daring Hebrews ſhall betide,
And bend with toils ſevere preſumptuous pride.'
Th' aſſembled princes riſing from the dome,
Attend the monarch to his regal home;
When lo! the prophet ſtretch'd his rod on high,
Black ſhades on ſhades came tumbling down the ſky!
Wide yawn'd the caverns, where primeval night
Ruſh'd forth unchain'd, and wreſtled with the light;
From heav'n's bright chambers fled the affrighted day,
Nor waits to ſhoot her weſtern dewy ray:
Impenetrable glooms thick horrors ſpread,
And o'er their limbs a deathful torpor ſhed.
Struck with amaze the languid monarch lay,
And vainly waited the return of day;
Thick ambient clouds, dark, deep, chaotic night,
Shudder'd the feelings, and oppreſs'd the ſight.
No more th' elaſtick ſtreamers of the morn,
With variegated rays the heav'ns adorn;

And playing on the mountain top, they peep
Down in the vale, and o'er the ſtreamlets ſweep;
When Sol, upgliding from his lucid bed,
Imbibes the tears which infant day had ſhed.
No more the thrilling lays from woodlands ſound,
And charm the rural villagers around;
Who riſing with the dawn—the whiſtling ſwain
Attends the milk-maid o'er the humid plain;
And each with buſy glee their taſks purſue,
To till the ground, or prune the ſtalk anew;
Or from the heifer's yielding udder gain
Supply for need, or threſh the golden grain;
Or tend the feather'd tribe with fatt'ning food,
Or fell the faggots in the ecchoing wood.
No more the city in rude tumults riſe,
And glitt'ring ſhew the gazing croud ſurprize;
Or ſocial friendſhip in the genial hour,
Or blithſome love, attend the verdant bow'r;
But wrapt in gloom, the paſſive ſleeper lies,
Or wakeful ſhudd'ring, impotent to riſe.
Th' Egyptians wait in vain the dawn of day,
In vain they wait, and mourn the time away;

None roſe from whence they lay—none could attend
Their weighty cares, or look upon a friend.
Three days roll'd on, in fears diſaſtrous worn,
And needful wants, unable to be borne;
When Pharoah roſe, oppreſs'd with tedious pain,
And ſhook his ſtupor off, and rous'd his train;
Thro' the opacous heavens a gleamy ray
Betokens hopeful of returning day;
Th' attendant guards he ſent—a loyal band,
To bid the prophets haſte from Goſhen's land.
The favour'd Moſes knew what God decreed,
And with the men to court directs his ſpeed;
Dreaded by all, his wond'rous magic known,
For Egypt's ſons th' Eternal's power diſown.
Now the wan morning ſhot her pallid ray,
Glimm'ring from eaſt reluctant peep'd the day;
Before the king the dauntleſs prophets ſtood,
Who thus, unhumbled, the diſpute renew'd:
" Did I not freedom on the tribes beſtow?
And yet thy magic brings another woe.
Now I agree that all the Hebrews ſtray,
And to thy God their due oblations pay;

Only their flocks and herds with me remain,
As hoſtages for their return again?"
' Our cattle alſo, and whate'er we boaſt,
(The prophet cried) ſhall quit th' unfriendly coaſt.'
" Look to thyſelf, (the wrathful king rejoin'd)
For evil waits to cruſh thy daring mind;
When next I ſee thy face—mark me—thy life
Shall pay the forfeit dear, and end the ſtrife.
Hence thou, and dread thy ſentence, which I've
paſt;
The day thou ſeeſt my face ſhall be thy laſt."
Then Moſes anſwer'd to the wrath he bore,
' Thou haſt well ſaid—I'll ſee thy face no more.'
Then ſwift repaſſing thro' the regal train,
The prophets reach the captive land again.
No one attempts the preſcient Moſes' life,
Leſt he himſelf fall victim in the ſtrife;
Guarded by ſome celeſtial pow'r he ſtands,
And awes the trembling murd'rer's guileful hands.
Now the black miniſters of death
Await to ſeize the impious breath;
The God Supreme his mandate gave,
To ſend the rebels to the grave;

Thro' th' illimitable ſphere Ariel flew,
Brought from the ſkies the direful ſentence due.
On the high pinions of immortal fame,
Thro' wond'ring nations flew the prophets' name;
Where'er, with worth celeſtial they appear,
All Egypt's ſons the ſapient men revere;
For them the Hebrew ſlaves more mercy found,
And enemies in gen'rous deeds abound.
So when from adverſe, proſp'rous fates diſcloſe,
A ſhoal of friends will ſpring from former foes.
Th' Egyptians, fearful of another woe,
What Iſrael begs, with ready hands beſtow;
The king, refuſing mercy, which they aſk,
Commands his ſervants to increaſe their taſk.
" What more (the monarch cried) can we bewail?
Thoſe plagues are paſt, what others can aſſail?
Lo! ſhall we now give up the point, and mourn
The needful ſlaves, who never will return?
On high-rais'd altars bid th' oblations ſmoke,
And each our holy deities invoke;
Pay to the gods which in my temples ſhine
The honours due, with latent rites divine;

Before them place the gifts of fragrance round,
And ſhed ambroſia o'er the holy ground.
With awful pomp Oſiris' aid implore,
And on his ſhrine the ſacred unguents pour;
That we no more thoſe ſorrows may ſuſtain,
But with their aid our peace and joys regain.
Abſorb'd in woe, our gods neglected ſtand,
And their juſt wrath concurs to plague our land."
He ſaid—and from the council mov'd in ſtate,
Leaving his princes in the deep debate;
Meanwhile, prophetic of the coming ill,
The prophets fly to ſpeak their Sov'reign's will;
Met the aſſembled couns'lors at the gate,
And fearleſs thus unfold impending fate:
" Thus ſaith our GOD, whoſe thunders ſhake the world,
Whoſe mighty hand the wat'ry clouds unfurl'd;
Who turn'd to blood the overflowing main,
And bade the ſea emit the deathful train;
Who ſent the locuſts and devouring flies,
And cloth'd in pitchy ſhades the frowning skies;
And o'er the fertile glebe dire famine led,
And laid thy mighty men among the dead;

Not humbled yet to let the Hebrews go,
Awful deſtruction waits my ſpeedy blow;
When murky ſhadows ſwim the midnight air,
I'll paſs the gloom, and to this land repair.
Lo! from my hand the vengeful jav'lin flies,
And ſudden death ſhall ev'ry houſe ſurprize;
From the proud monarch on his throne of ſtate,
To the plebeian ſhoots the midnight fate.
The firſt-born of each ſtubborn rebel dies,
Who ſtill with impious breath my pow'r defies;
The dreadful cries re-echoing thro' the plain,
Were never yet, nor ſhall be heard again;
Whoe'er againſt my people moves his tongue,
Shall dearly pay th' inhoſpitable wrong:
Then ſhall ye ſend a ſuppliant train t' implore
The Hebrew tribes to quit your famiſh'd ſhore."
Inſpir'd he ſpake—then ceaſing—from the dome
With riſing wrath he haſtens to his home.

CANTO X.

IN orient climes, from treaſur'd floods of light,
The dawning roſeate ſuperſedes the night;
Swift flies a cherub with the morning ray,
And from her chambers came the radiant day.
Then fled the ſpirit from th' Eternal's throne,
And further makes th' Almighty's pleaſure known;
Whilſt breathing ſoftly o'er the prophet's ſoul,
Celeſtial joys thro' all his ſenſes ſtole.
Then thus the LORD:—" Unheeding my beheſt,
The captive ſlaves detain'd are ſtill oppreſs'd;
My wonders multiplied with one more woe,
They then ſhall freedom on the tribes beſtow.

Then thus to Iſrael's congregation ſay,
The firſt of Abib* is a ſacred day;
Take from your flocks the choiceſt of your breed,
Each houſe a lamb, and let the victim bleed;
And when the ſable evening veils the ſkies,
Bid all the tribes attend the ſacrifice.
Bring each his veſſel to preſerve the gore,
And with it ſtain the lintels of your door;
For lo! in midnight hour I paſs the gloom,
And Egypt's firſt-born to deſtruction doom:
On all their gods my fury I will pour,
And vengeance juſt the heathens ſhall devour:
For I am God, and there's no god but me,
I am the Lord—no other lords ſhall be.
Then when with fury I repaſs the coaſts,
And view the blood beſprinkled on the poſts,
I'll paſs you by—and this is their reward,
Who keep my judgments, and obey my word.
Before the blazing fire the victim ſpread,
And eat it haſty with unleaven'd bread;

* The 22d of April, which was paſt; the paſſover was inſtituted the 24th of May, and they quitted Egypt the 25th of May.

When joyful hence you ſtray, in foes' deſpite,
Full ſeven days prolong the feaſtful rite.
Gird up thy loins, thy ſhelt'ring mantle ſpread,
Bind on thy ſhoes, with cov'ring on thy head,
With ſtaff in hand, nor linger on a ſeat,
And ev'ry year the ſacrifice repeat.
When thus your children view with curious eye,
Say ye—Th' Almighty's vengeance paſs'd us by;
Then all my wonders to thy race record,
And teach thy fam'ly to obey my word."
Here ceas'd th' Ethereal Pow'r, and ſwiftly flies
Thro' fleeting clouds, and paſs'd beyond the skies.
Now heav'n portends with weighty gloom
Th' eventful hour of Egypt's doom;
All nature views th' unequal fray,
And haſtens on the lamp of day.
When ſunk in weſt no trembling ſtars ariſe,
But modeſt viel'd, whilſt GOD deſcends the skies;
Then roſe the prophets to divine employ,
The Hebrews glowing with impatient joy;
No more in toils they paſs the mournful day,
Nor ſink beneath a raging tyrant's ſway;

Whilſt thro' their land the deathful ſorrow flows,
They left the ſlaves to gladneſs and repoſe.
On Goſhen's plain th' aſſembling elders throng,
And curious wonder brought the crouds along;
Moſes to all the words of God relate,
Expectant of th' Egyptians' midnight fate:
" 'Tis for the ſafety of each houſe agreed
To ſlay a victim of your choiceſt breed;
Then let a veſſel catch the ſtreaming gore,
And with it ſtain the lintels of your door.
In midnight hour th' Almighty paſſes through,
And ſpares that houſe where blood appears in view.
Whilſt on the paſchal lamb you feaſt in haſte,
With ſtaff in hand, and ſheltring mantle brac'd,
The dread deſtroyer flies thro' all the coaſts,
And ſpares alone where blood diſtains the poſts;
Each year repeat and memorize the hour,
When we alone eſcap'd the vengeful power."
The prophet ceas'd—the croud with one accord
Bow'd lowly, grateful to their Sov'reign Lord.
Obedient to the word, the elders ſpeed,
And bear the fleecy victims doom'd to bleed;

With ſacred awe they ſhed the guſhing blood,
And in a baſon flow'd the crimſon flood.
The foaming veſſel Aaron brought along,
Whilſt rank by rank the ſolemn croud paſs'd on;
The prophet's hand a bunch of hyſſop bore,
With pious mind he bath'd it in the gore.
With exhortations flowing from his tongue,
The lintel ſtain'd on which his door was hung;
Th' example ſhewn before the day's decline,
Each Hebrew haſtens to fulfil the ſign;
Thus emblematical Meſſiah dies,
Averts the doom, and calms the angry skies;
This done, their doors ſecur'd, they trembling
ſpread
The roaſted viands and unleaven'd bread;
Around their boards the liſt'ning fam'lies ſtand,
With garments girded, and their ſtaves in hand;
When lo! the ſable hour of death drew nigh,
And horrid darkneſs veil'd the mournful sky;
All heav'n looks on, and hell's ten thouſand eyes,
Whilſt the dread warrior ſhot thro' cleaving skies;
With dreadful vengeance from his bleſt abode,
Wrapt in the gloom, deſcends the mighty GOD!

Intent on death, repaſſing cities round,
The liſt'ning Hebrews hear the ruſhing ſound!
Their blood congealing with the dread ſurpriſe,
They ſhudd'ring ſtand, and lift to heav'n their eyes:
As when the torrents from the tow'ring ſteep
Impetuous downward join the roaring deep,
Guſhing tremendous from the craggy bound,
Deafen all nature, and at diſtance ſound:
Sudden the dying ſhrieks aſcend the air,
And ev'ry houſe is fix'd in wild deſpair;
Ghaſtly with terror, riſing from his bed,
The ſpeechleſs monarch finds his firſt-born dead!
Heir of his throne!—within his boſom roſe
Diſtracting thoughts and overwhelming woes.
Throughout the palace ſounds of horror riſe,
And ev'ry rebel's firſt-born darling dies;
To death's bleak ſhades their riſing hopes are flown,
And Pharoah's dome reſounds the mournful groan.
Now wild confuſion thro' the city flies,
And hopeleſs parents rend the air with cries;
The infant victim on its mother's breaſt,
Sighs its young ſoul to a diviner reſt;

Whilſt frantic, ſwooning at the ſudden ſight,
Her reaſon leaves her in deſpairing night.
Whilſt like a cedar, tow'ring to the skies,
The blooming youths to ſenſe mature ariſe,
The parents' pride—they fondly view their boy,
Bound to their heart, a conſtant ſource of joy;
Sudden cut off, and blaſted in his bloom,
He ſinks in death—enwrapt in midnight gloom:
So ſtands a plant, with op'ning bloſſoms crown'd,
Wrench'd by ſome whirlwind from its native ground.

Around the palace flock the weeping throng,
Loud imprecations flowing from their tongue;
Confuſion reigns—involv'd in deepeſt gloom,
Each wretch expects to ſhare the dreadful doom;
Terrifick ſcene! aloud they wail the dead,
And on their heads the flying aſhes ſhed.
A ſpeedy meſſage, by the king's command,
Bids all the Hebrews quit th' Egyptian land:
" With flocks and herds, and all that Iſrael boaſts,
Bid them be gone, nor tarry on my coaſts;
But ſay to Moſes, bleſs me ere thou go,
Nor us repentant overwhelm with woe."

Th' Egyptians, urgent for the men to fly,
Leſt while they linger they themſelves ſhould die;
In preparation ſtill the tribes delay,
And joyful wait the welcome dawn of day.
At length o'er hills and dales Aurora ſhone,
And brac'd with ſmiles her azure mantle on;
The Hebrew hoſts their GOD's commands obey,
Ere they for Canaan tempt the dang'rous way;
In ev'ry houſe the blazing fire they light,
To burn the refuſe of the ſacred rite;
No ſtranger ſhall preſume prophane to eat,
Or taſte the paſchal ſacramental meat.
To all their neighbours, once their bitter foes,
To bid farewell each crafty Hebrew goes;
Their gold, their jewels, veſts, and precious ſtore,
The men would borrow, ere they quit the ſhore;
Whatever they require before they go,
With hearts averſe the fearful hands beſtow.
The proſp'rous man with haughty pride
His brothers ſuff'rings doth deride,
But when dread juſtice ſmites his breaſt,
The coward ſinks with fear oppreſt.

If thou would'ſt with thy friend ſhare fortune's
ſmile,
His adverſe ſtate with friendly acts beguile;
For man is born to ſorrows here below,
And fluctuates 'mid ſcenes of joy and woe.
Now ſhoots thro' orient valves the florid day,
And Iſrael's ſons for Canaan take their way;
In order rank'd, the prophet leads before,
And in his hand the ſacred rod he bore.
The patriarch's ſons, ſix hundred thouſand ſtrong,
With flocks, and herds, and treaſures, paſs'd along;
Not one—one ſingle of the num'rous train,
In weakneſs droop, but free from care and pain.
The hallow'd urn where Joſeph's aſhes lay,
With pious care his ſons bore on the way;
For this that prophet, wiſeſt of the wiſe,
Preſcient foretold his brethren, ere he dies:
" The promis'd land on thee thy God beſtows,
Where luſcious fruit in vernal fragrance blows;
When hence you go, bear ye my bones away,
And in my father's grave my aſhes lay."
Thro' pop'lous lands, to promis'd Canaan near,
They were not led, leſt war purſue them there;

And journeying on, Egyptian foes repent,
And bring them back, with fear and travail ſpent;
From Egypt's land in trackleſs roads they ſtray,
Borne ſafe and eaſy thro' the unknown way.
Upon their ſhoulders brac'd, their baggage hung,
And joyous voices thro' the army rung;
A croud of Egypt's ſons, more free from guile,
Attended Iſrael from the land of Nile;
From Rameſes to Succoth Moſes led,
And flying fame fill'd cities round with dread.
Now pomp funereal ſolemn ſcenes diſplay,
To their laſt home each houſe their dead convey;
As thro' the ſtreets the ſable croud paſs by,
The ſilent anguiſh trickling from the eye;
The ſorrowing parents wail their breathleſs boy,
Bereft of hope, and loſt to ev'ry joy.
Lo! the fond mother, 'mid the mournful throng,
Her train ſupports her trembling ſteps along,
Convuls'd with woe—the darling of her womb
She follows ſlowly to the ſilent tomb;
But ere he's hid for ever from the light,
For ever hid, no more to meet her ſight,

She ſoft advances for a laſt adieu,
The kindly tear her pallid cheeks bedew;
Then—" Oh! my ſon!"—th' unfiniſh'd accents die,
And words are loſt in one expreſſive ſigh;
Wildly ſhe looks—her ſorrows ceaſe to flow,
Congeal'd ſhe ſtands—a monument of woe!
Exhauſted nature loaths the ſhining day,
And from the tomb ſhe bears her woes away.

CANTO XI.

ON Succoth's plain the hoſt of Hebrews reſt,
With richeſt cates the cheering viands dreſt;
From bondage freed, each breaſt with joy o'erflows,
And liberty in ev'ry boſom glows;
The Hebrews' liberty is law divine,
Which dooms each vice, and bids the virtues ſhine.
When welcome morn, in native radiance ſhone,
The prophet roſe, and thus beſpoke the throng:
" Ye ſons of Iſrael, let that day be bleſt,
And grateful on each memory impreſt!
That joyful day!—from Egypt's bondage freed!
With cheerful mind let all your victims bleed,
In ſacred worſhip to Almighty Pow'r,
Who ſmote the firſt-born in the midnight hour;

His arm of vengeance hurl'd them to their graves,
And thus reveng'd your infants in the waves.
When in the promis'd land in ſafety brought,
You would forget the acts his arm has wrought;
The firſtlings of your cattle ye ſhall ſlay,
Each year revolving this memorial day;
This ſhalt thou teach thy children as they riſe,
Paint it to view, and raiſe their young ſurpriſe;
Full ſeven days the feaſt ye ſhall prolong,
And year by year repeat the ſacred ſong."
This ſaid—their wives and babes in ſafety plac'd,
Their kneading troughs, and uſeful baggage brac'd.
Harneſs'd complete, the choiceſt of the throng,
With ſhield and buckler brought the rear along;
Then onward moving, ſtrengthen'd by their God,
The prophet bore in hand the ſacred rod.

At length encamp'd on Etham's woody ground,
Whoſe wavy trees the ſpringing bloſſoms crown'd,
Juſt bord'ring on the wild's extenſive ſhade,
Thro' pathleſs ways they paſs the mazy glade;
The Red Sea, ruſhing on the woodland ſhore,
Drowns the wild muſick with its boiſt'rous roar;

In flow'ry pomp young ſpring her chaplets wear,
Soft fragrance floating on the morning air.
Whilſt there encamp'd, they wait their God's
beheſt,
At length his words impreſs'd the prophet's breaſt:
" Ariſe from hence, for Pharoah ſtill diſdains
My pow'r, and follows with his warlike trains."
This ſaid, in haſte they roſe—when from the ſkies
A lamp of light ſwam on before their eyes!
Th' aſtoniſh'd croud attend th' ethereal guide,
The mighty pow'r of heav'n is on their ſide.
At length, on day's decline, the ev'ning ſhades
Glanc'd on the hills, and flitted o'er the glades;
As darkneſs roſe, the wondrous pillar grew
Light and more light, then blaz'd full in the view.
The flaming torch hung pendant in the air,
And ſwam before, to ſhed its kindly glare;
No weary pains oppreſs the favour'd throng,
Brac'd were their nerves, their frames more firmly
ſtrung.
Who with a voice of proud ſucceſs,
Can curſe, where God will deign to bleſs?

A guard, unſeen by mortal eyes,
Surrounds the favour'd of the ſkies.
The heav'nly troop celeſtify the air,
Whoſe healing wings balſamick unguents bear;
Heedleſs of ſleep, they journey in the ſhade,
Whilſt health, and ſtrength, and joy, each breaſt pervade.
Meanwhile, forgetful of the wonders ſhown,
Th' Egyptian monarch mourns the Hebrews flown;
No more the building cities glad the eye,
Or tow'ring fanes aſpire to meet the ſky;
All left undone—the curious work disjoin'd—
The ſlaves are fled, nor left they ought behind;
The people ſorrow for their treaſures loſt,
And haughty Pharoah muſters up his hoſt.
Six hundred chariots—captains of the band,
Horſemen and foot, prepare to quit the land;
Completely arm'd, they haſten to the fray,
Nor doubt to make the helpleſs ſlaves their prey.
This thought and ſaid, they march the army on,
And ſhouts of foes thro' ecchoing woodlands rung.

The trumpets ſounding to prepare for war,
The Hebrews hear the fearful din afar;
With morning ray all Iſrael lift their eyes,
Eſpy their foes, and ſink with dread ſurprize;
From diſtant hills the beamy bucklers ſhine,
And poliſh'd jav'lins ſhoot from line to line.
Th' affrighted tribes, o'ertaken on the ſhore,
Their foes behind, and roaring ſea before—
Struck with diſmay, they lift a bitter cry,
Smite on their breaſt, and hold their hands on high:
Then thus—forgetful of the wonders ſhown,
The daring murmurs flow from ev'ry tongue:
" We from our maſters thou haſt urg'd to flight,
And now deſtruction waits us in the fight;
Unus'd to war, no diſcipline we know,
Victorious triumph waits our cruel foe;
From warriors ſprung, they fearleſs in the field,
To battle train'd, their deathful weapons wield;
Burden'd with terrors for our children's life,
We loaded ſtand unarm'd, to meet the ſtrife."

No more the prophet heard, but thus began,
And cheer'd the ſpirits of each drooping man:
'Forbear ye tribes, lo! wherefore this diſmay?
Ye ſhall behold the power of GOD to-day.
Obſerve yon' hoſt with ſpeed enrag'd purſue,
No more ſhall ye this hoſtile train review;
Behold, the Pow'rs on high for us appear!
Truſt in your GOD, and baniſh ev'ry fear.'
Then from high heav'n the Voice celeſtial cried:
"Stretch forth thy rod—the waters ſhall divide!"
In ſight of all on ſhore the prophet ſtood,
Stretch'd forth his rod high o'er the ſwelling flood;
The ſwelling flood affrighted quits its bed,
Waves ruſh'd on waves, and from the Hebrews fled!
Th' obedient waters ceas'd their noiſy ſweep,
And ſofter zephyrs dry'd the oozy deep;
Then enter'd Moſes, follow'd by the throng,
And dread ſurprize ſeal'd up each murm'ring tongue!
Each ſide, like walls, tranſparent ocean roſe,
The lofty mound the refluent waves oppoſe;

An ample road! the prophet leads before,
And wav'd the rod which in his hand he bore,
The billows ſund'ring with a mighty roar!
The ſurgy ſquadrons in battalia ſtand,
In dread array to cruſh the Memphian band;
The guardian pow'r which firſt their road aſſign'd,
Remov'd from thence, and ſhelter'd them behind;
A cheering ray thro' all the army glows,
But dark and diſmal to their daring foes.

At length proud Pharoah on the ſhore appears,
And furious anger buried all his fears;
Then ruſhing heedleſs, follow'd by his train,
Hotly purſues them thro' th' indignant main.
Now night's dark ſhadows o'er the mountains ſweep,
Remantled heav'n, and ſhot along the deep;
The Memphian hoſt, impeded in their way,
Move ſlowly on, and anxious wait the day;
The favour'd race elated march along,
And ceaſeleſs wonders ſtrike th' admiring throng.
When, gliding o'er the azure lawn,
Appear'd the chariot of the dawn;

With various dies the waters glow,
And ſoft in wavy murm'rings flow;
Whilſt Iſrael paſs'd its hoſpitable bed,
Shelter'd from foes—by Heav'n's avenger led!
When Pharoah's hoſt eſpy'd the Hebrews ſpeed,
They haſte their march, and meet the fate decreed.
Down from his azure throne th' all-ſeeing eye
Did the vain efforts of this hoſt deſcry;
Their horſes, chariots, and a mighty train,
Following the ſons of Iſrael thro' the main.
When lo! the ethereal pow'r ſhoots from the ſky,
Arreſts the chariots as they rapid fly;
Viewleſs he wrench'd the wheels—they ceaſe to roll,
And gath'ring horrors ſhock the boldeſt ſoul;
In vain the king beſpoke the trembling train,
To turn the legions from the threat'ning main:
" The Hebrews' mighty GOD againſt us fight,
The ſea rolls on! ye people, ſpeed your flight!"
He cries aloud—he cries, and vainly mourns,
The parted water to its place returns!
They ſtrive to gain the intercepted ſhore,
The joyful Hebrews hear the gen'ral roar.

In vain they ſtretch, the monarch urg'd the throng,
Appall'd they ſtand, and view the ſea roll on.
" Stretch forth thy rod"—the prophet knew the
ſound,
And ſtretch'd his rod high o'er the deep profound;
The waves unfurling with a dreadful roar,
Ruſh'd in embrace, and block'd up all the ſhore.
In vain they ſhriek, and ſtrive toward the coaſt,
The profluent waters caught the ſcreaming hoſt!
The helpleſs army, ſcatter'd far and wide,
O'erwhelm'd in waves, they beat the foamy tide.
The fainting monarch from his lofty car
Views the wild ruin of his hoſt afar;
A mountain wave high ruſhing o'er his head,
Prone falls the king, and mingles with the dead.
The roaring billows ſcatter all the train,
Daſh them on ſhore, and whirl them o'er the
main;
The implements of war and baggage toſt,
On the wide ſurges from the ken is loſt.
Th' aſtoniſh'd tribes, with awe and dread amaze,
And tremb'ling o'er the warring waters gaze.

At length th' indignant ocean's rage ſubſides,
Ceas'd the dread roar, and huſh'd the angry tides;
The zephyr's ſilken wing with buſy ſweep
Skims the ſmooth ſurface of the azure deep.
In grateful praiſe adoring Iſrael bends,
And on the ſhore of Marah's land aſcends.

CANTO XII.

THEN ſtood the prophets 'mid the wond'ring throng,
And to their GOD compos'd the grateful ſong;
With ſoft-ton'd timbrel tuneful Miriam ſtands,
Surrounded joyous by the female bands;
With ſacred ardour, as ſhe touch'd the ſtrings,
Aloud in harmony each Hebrew ſings;
The propheteſs, in this divine employ,
Join'd by the throng, reſounds their grateful joy:
"Ye Hebrew tribes unite in ſong,
And celebrate our GOD;
Who cruſh'd the daring ſons of wrong,
Beneath the warring flood.

The fluid legions he controul'd,
And barr'd the gulph below;
The martial waves in order roll'd,
And charg'd th' affrighted foe.
He gave the word, the waters fled,
And with a ſudden ſweep
He cleav'd old ocean's ſwelling bed,
And plung'd them in the deep.
With thee not Egypt's gods compare,
Which in their temples ſhine;
Nor can the giant warriors bear
Thy mighty Pow'r Divine.
He chas'd the routed army with his breath,
And ſunk the tyrant in eternal death;
His potent hand the ample graves ordain
Of horſe and rider in the foamy main.
On the Edomian ſhore bright fame ſhall ſpread
The mighty deed which laid them with the dead;
Th' Amorian land ſhall tremble at thy rod,
And Sihon own the wonders of our God;
Whilſt Canaan's ſons and Moab melt away,
Like yielding wax, and ſhun the hoſtile day:

Us thro' the depths his hand victorious bore,
And led us on to Marah's peaceful ſhore;
When in the promis'd land in ſafety brought,
We'll celebrate the acts his arm has wrought."

Then in the airy dance the damſels join'd,
Reſounding ſongs with one concurring mind;
When Miriam touch'd the heav'n-melodious ſtrings,
High in the air the joyful dancer ſprings;
Till ſable ev'ning ſhaded o'er the ſkies,
And ſhed ſoft ſlumbers o'er the drowſy eyes.
In early morn they range the country round,
Not one ſweet ſpring to quench their thirſt was found;
The lucid rills which wander'd thro' the coaſt,
With bitter flavour ſicken'd all the hoſt:
So tries high Heav'n the children of the duſt,
If they deſpair, or in his mercy truſt;
And for the int'reſt all deſires fulfill
Of them whoſe patience waits his righteous will.

The children weep, the men lament aloud,
Impatient murmurs thunder thro' the croud;
Forgetful of the mighty wonders ſhown,
The glorious conqueſts which their God had won,

They wait not patient till his pow'r beſtows,
But from each tongue th' ungrateful paſſion flows:
They chide the prophet—to his God he cries—
Th' offended Pow'r in mercy ſoon replies:
" A ſtately tree with healing branches grows
On Marah's plain, and none its virtue knows;
Take ye the balm, and in the waters caſt;
The bitter ſtreams ſhall ſweeten to your taſte.
How long will faithleſs Iſrael doubt my pow'r?
They truſt not me in the deſpairing hour;
Forgetful of the mighty wonders ſhown,
They at their will arraign me on my throne."
At length, their thirſt aſſuag'd, they onward ſtray,
Soon as the Eaſt reſtor'd the vivid day;
When kenn'd at diſtance, they with glad ſurprize,
Hail'd the gay coaſt where Elam's mountains riſe.
They ſoon arrive, when marching thro' the fields,
The cooling breeze extatic pleaſure yields;
Twelve rows of palms beſtow refreſhing ſhade,
Twelve ſprings of water cheer the flow'ry glade;
The genial bow'rs their pow'rful fragrance ſhed,
And roſeate bloſſoms o'er the valley ſpread;

Elyſian ſongſters thrill from ev'ry ſpray,
Or on the margin of the riv'let play.
The Hebrews pitch their tents, aud food prepare,
And ſweet refreſhments baniſh ev'ry care;
The fatten'd viands temper'd by the fire,
And Elam's water, ſatisfied deſire.
The grateful tribes, with one according voice,
Beneath their God's protecting wing rejoice;
The ſhining day they cloſe with ſacred ſong,
In ev'ning incenſe join the tuneful throng.
Thus they—whilſt ſhades involve the ſky,
And ſlumbers ſoft embow'r the eye;
Cherubic hoſts their tents ſurround,
Extend their wings, and hover round;
Refreſhing ſleep to Iſrael's eyelids giv'n,
Whilſt angels watch from the arcade of heav'n.
Then with the riſing dawn in fair array,
Toward the wild of Sin they move away;
Juſt ſituate 'twixt Elam's flow'ry plain,
And Sinai's mount, which kens the rolling main:
There, in the ſpacious wilderneſs alone,
From nations round they make their diſtant home.

Whilſt there encamp'd, their needful viands fail,
And thro' the tribes the fears of want prevail;
Lo! from each tongue the mutt'ring paſſion flows,
Heedleſs of Him who ſav'd them from their foes:
" Oh! would to GOD (the impatient Hebrews mourn)
We could to Goſhen's fruitful land return!
There by the fleſh-pots as we ſat and fed,
We had our fill, and taſted better bread.
Now here we're brought within this wild of woes,
Where corn, nor fruit, nor needful herbage grows;
A barren land!—Oh! ſhould we here abide,
Much better we in Egypt all had died:"
Thus they—whilſt from his throne th' all-piercing eye
Did their ungrateful murmurings deſcry.
'Thus ſaith our GOD! (the anger'd prophet cries)
The bread of heav'n, the product of the skies,
Shall be your food, if ye will be inclin'd
To keep my precepts with a willing mind.'
" Not againſt us, (the man with meekneſs cries)
Againſt the LORD your unjuſt murm'rings riſe."

This ſaid, he haſtes t' obey the Sov'reign word,
And bid the people ſtand before the LORD:
As farther in the wild they lift their eyes,
Deſcending glory radiates the ſkies!
While as they ſtood the gracious voice began,
And thro' the wild the ſolemn cadence rang:
" I've heard the wrathful words, and yet will I
With ready hand my people's wants ſupply;
I for your father's ſake his children ſpare,
That ye no more rebel—obſerve due care.
With fleſh at eventide ye ſhall be fed,
And ev'ry morn ſhall fall ethereal bread;
No more offend the mighty Pow'r on high,
Who made the earth, and hung the ſpacious ſky."
This ſaid—the trembling throng repentant ſtood,
And wait impatient for the heav'nly food.
At ſober eve the cooling breezes riſe,
And troops of quails fall breathleſs from the ſkies;
And when Aurora uſher'd in the dawn,
Ambroſia thick lay ſcatter'd o'er the lawn;
Fall'n with the morning dew, like hoar-froſt round,
Cloſe to the camp, and cover'd all the ground.

This they examine with a dubious mind,
Then taſte well pleas'd, and reliſh food divine;
" 'Tis manna!" to each other they replied,
' It is the food God gives, (the prophet cried)
Then haſte, ye tribes, ſupply your need to-day,
For with the fervid ſun it melts away.'
Full forty years the tribes delicious fed,
And ate, ſuffic'd, the light ambroſial bread;
An omer's meaſure they preſerve, to bear
To Canaan's land, as a memorial there.
At length, at time decreed, they take their way,
And nearer to their promis'd Canaan ſtray;
At Rephidim no cheering water flows,
Nor wait they patient till their God beſtows:
Again the rebel tribes impatient cried,
The prophets mourn, and thus the God replied:
" Take thou thy rod—on Horeb's rock I ſtand,
Which when thou ſmiteſt, I will aid thy hand;
There ſhall they drink—behold, I've heard their cries,
Againſt the tribes my vengeance ſhall ariſe."
God ſpake—and Moſes haſtens to obey,
And with the murm'ring throng he ſpeeds away;

He ſmote the rock—the melting ſtone divides,
Shook to its centre, and forth ruſh'd the tides!
The ſwelling ſtreams in wavy radiance glow,
Guſh'd down the rock, and rang'd the plains
below.
In ſilent awe all Iſrael ſtand amaz'd,
And o'er the ſtreams with lifted hand they gaze!
Proſtrate to earth, and trembling with diſmay,
Repentant tribes their praiſes due repay;
Then drank their fill, where Maſſah's ſtreamlets
flow,
And rolling on ſupplies the camp below.
The ſilver rill with tuneful tale
Glides ſinging on to diſtant vale;
Whilſt eccho hears, and ſounds abroad
The wonders of the mighty GOD;
When wildly daſhing from the ſteepy grounds,
From rock to rock the awful deed reſounds.

CANTO XIII.

THEN Am'lek's king th' exploits of Iſrael heard,
With fear and ſpeed the hoſtile troops prepar'd;
They beat to war—the clarion's deep-ton'd ſound
Arous'd with energy the warriors round;
Gigantick heroes march'd the plain along,
And with their ſweep the vales and woodlands rung.
Then ſtirr'd the ready tribes, nor fear'd the train,
But rang'd in order on th' embattled plain:
Upright and fierce, the ſturdy Hebrews glow
With martial fire, t' engage th' intruding foe;
The valiant Joſhua heads all Iſrael's bands,
Whilſt on the hill the preſcient Moſes ſtands.

To heathen armies, countleſs, brave, and ſtrong,
To ſhoot the dart, or wield the lance belong;
Us'd to the conqueſt, bred to ſkilful war,
The giants ſeek their rival pow'rs afar;
The dauntleſs tribes prepar'd to meet th' affray,
Tho' few—they knew their GOD could give the day.
Now hoſtile foes advance for great emprize,
Meet front to front, as ſhouts for battle riſe;
Now line to line the ardent troops engage,
And warmer ſtill in deathful conteſt rage.
The prophet from his eminence review'd
The heaps of ſlain along the field beſtrew'd;
Uprear'd his rod—his riſing faith avails,
And Iſrael's hoſt againſt the foe prevails;
The heathen throng in countleſs numbers ſhine,
Whilſt fearleſs Iſrael feels the aid divine.
Now gaſping death in thouſand ſhapes appears,
Limbleſs they fall, or ſtabb'd with pointed ſpears;
Forth from their noſtrils ſmoaky vapours riſe,
And deathful fury flaſhes from their eyes;
Elated Iſrael with effectual blows,
Bear down the troops who dare their arms oppoſe.

Wearied at length, the prophet weaker grows,
Down falls his arm—then triumph Iſrael's foes;
Aaron and Hur, attendant in his train,
His ſtrengthleſs arms with ſpeedy care ſuſtain;
Whilſt Iſrael droops, and dubious vict'ry hung,
Again they ruſh, with conq'ring vigour ſtrung:
Again they face—the ſquadrons yield the ground,
And Iſrael mows the hoſtile legions down;
From man to man the vanquiſh'd monarch flies,
Urges the war, whilſt hills of wounded riſe;
Juſt ſpent with toil, each ſide engag'd in fight,
Till Sol declin'd, and warn'd approaching night.
O'er diſtant plains the groans of anguiſh ſound,
And deep-ton'd trumpets dying ſhrieks confound;
Thro' Am'lek's hoſt deſpairing horrors ſpread,
The daſtards turn'd, and from the Hebrews fled.
Still Moſes held in faith his rod on high,
They ſmite their foes, and follow as they fly;
When kindly ev'ning ſhaded o'er the day,
All Iſrael came victorious from th' affray.
A ſtore of booty grac'd the victors' arms,
And grateful praiſe each Hebrew's boſom warms;

An altar built, their ſacrifice they bring,
And ſhouts of joy along the vallies ring;
Thoſe acts engraven on a rock of fame,
Aſcribing praiſes to th' Almighty name.
When o'er the tribes the prophet had command,
He ſent his wife and ſons to Midian's land;
That ſafely with her ſire they might repoſe,
Free from each hardſhip, and the fear of foes.
Now Jethro heard what conqueſts GOD had won,
Nigh Horeb's mountain by his choſen ſon;
And brought Zipporah, with the ſons ſhe bore
Ere ſhe with Moſes ſaw the Memphian ſhore;
He brought her, as the prophet ſway'd the rod,
And judg'd the tribes upon the mount of GOD.
Soon as he heard his wife and children nigh,
The fond affection grac'd the prophet's eye;
As they advanc'd, and met his eager view,
He paid obeiſance to the prieſt as due;
His two lov'd boys embrac'd again by turns,
Parental pleaſure in his boſom burns!
Then to his tent they ſweet refection ſought,
And Moſes told the wonders GOD had wrought.

So paſs'd the day, till ſable night aroſe,
Then on their couch they yielded to repoſe;
When blithſome morn tripp'd down the radiant ſteep,
Rob'd in benev'lent ſmiles, and baniſh'd ſleep,
Then came the elders, due reſpect to pay
To Midian's prieſt, and ſpend a feaſtful day;
Firſt to their God they ſacrifice prepare,
And pious Jethro join'd the ſolemn pray'r;
Th' oblations o'er, the ſav'ry viands dreſt,
The elders haſte to join the joyful feaſt.
Zipporah's ſire, thus rev'renc'd by the throng,
Joy'd in the honours of his choſen ſon;
Aged and wiſe, his ſapient council found,
A due reception from the elders round
The prophet meekly heard to regulate
The ſeat of juſtice, and th' affairs of ſtate.
The aged ſire preparing to depart,
Rais'd the fond ſorrows in his children's heart;
Each one, ſurrounding, ſpeaks his laſt adieu,
The flowing tears his rev'rend cheeks bedew.

When thro' the tribes he haſtens on his way,
The elders throng their laſt reſpects to pay;
Diſmiſs'd with honour by the hoſts around,
He reach'd his home, with joy and ſafety crown'd.
Thus paſs'd three months ſince from the land of Ham,
From cruel bondage freed, the Hebrews came;
Whilſt waiting on their GOD one early day,
Toward the ſummit Moſes bent his way;
As at the firſt he preſs'd the holy ground,
Again he heard a voice celeſtial ſound:
" To Iſrael's favour'd race thus ſhalt thou ſay,
Heed ye my words, and my commands obey;
Then ſhall no cares your boſoms diſcompoſe,
From dangers free, and dreaded by your foes.
When thrice the ſun thro' yon bright arch has roll'd,
On Sinai's mount my glory I unfold:
Haſte thou, and ſanctify thyſelf among
The tribes, and thoſe who to thy houſe belong;
The mount encompaſs thou with fence and mound,
Leſt they to gaze preſs thro' on holy ground."

The prophet heard, and from the mount deſcends,
Rais'd up the fence, and ſacrifice attends.
When the third morn ſhot forth her ſilver ray,
Thund'rings and lightnings uſher'd in the day;
O'er the high ſummit circumambient clouds
It's viewleſs top in dark'ning terror ſhrouds:
Anon, whilſt round the forked lightnings play,
And thund'rings rumble down th' aërial way;
Whilſt clouds of ſmoke involve the deep aſcent,
And loaded ſkies with weighty glories rent:
Whilſt nature waits, in ſhudd'ring ſuſpence held,
And ev'ry heart with expectation ſwell'd—
Whilſt all with ſilent wonder gaz'd on high,
A burſt of glory ſpread o'er all the ſky;
Sudden from Sinai's top the trumpets ſound,
The mountain quak'd, and terror rent the ground!
The trembling tribes with ſtrange amaze ſurvey
The wavy flames which ſwam along the ſky;
Deſcending from the cloud, the mighty GOD
On Sinai's conſecrated ſummit trod!
In dazzling radiance, which bedimm'd the ſight,
He ſat recumbent on a throne of light—

Light inacceſſible to mortal eyes,
Which gilds the courts of joy beyond the ſkies;
Beneath his glorious feet a cryſtal ſtone,
Around his head the varied rainbow ſhone;
His weighty ſtep electrified the ſteep,
Old Sinai rock'd from her foundations deep!
The hov'ring ſeraphs wait their GOD's command,
And bore the trumpets glitt'ring in their hand;
Then loud and long the awful clarions ſound,
And louder grew, whilſt nature trembled round.
Then humbly bold, to GOD the fearleſs man
Amid the terrors his addreſs began:
The Almighty heard!—then ceas'd the ſounds on high,
He caught the lightnings, and becalm'd the ſky;
A gracious voice reſounding from the throne
To Moſes made the ſov'reign pleaſure known.
Swift to the camp the prophet loftier trod,
And brought the people forth to meet with GOD;
Along the bounds in ranks all Iſrael ſtood,
And with amaze the burning mountain view'd;

Then ſounds the voice which rends the blazing
sky,
And bade the favour'd prophet haſte on high.
All Iſrael preſs to ken at diſtant view,
Swift up the ſteep the pious Moſes flew.



CANTO XIV.

NOW ſilence ſolemn ſeiz'd all nature round,
Trembling they heard the heav'nly voice reſound;
The awful cadence at a diſtance rung,
Whilſt chilly ſhudd'rings ſhook th' affrighted throng.
From Sinai's mountain th' Almighty ſpoke,
Mantled in flames, and viel'd in clouds of ſmoke:
" I am the LORD thy GOD, whoſe mighty hand
Brought forth my people from oppreſſion's land:
Thou ſhalt not make, nor ſhalt thou bow thy knee
To any god or ſov'reign lord but me.
Thou ſhalt not make an imag'd god, to pay
Prophane oblations, heedleſs of my ſway,

Like any thing on earth or heav'n above,
Or which beneath the rolling waters move;
For, jealous of mine honour, I'll repay
Thy daring ſin upon a future day;
On thee and thine conſuming anger flows,
And children's children ſhall partake thy woes:
But they who are in my commandments found,
Shall with my guardian care be compaſs'd round.
Thou ſhalt not take the name of GOD in vain,
And thus inſult me with a tongue prophane.
The holy ſabbath is a day divine,
Thy worſhip and the ſacred hours are mine;
Six days thou ſhalt for needful wants prepare,
But on the ſabbath lay aſide thy care;
For I the LORD ſix days my work purſu'd,
And heav'n and earth, and ocean's depth review'd;
But reſted on the ſev'nth—that ſacred day
I hallow'd; to thy GOD thy duty pay;
For I thy ſervice claim, and all thy pow'rs,
Waſte not in indolence the ſacred hours.
Honour thy parents, and thy days ſhall be
Long in the land which I beſtow on thee.

Thou ſhalt not kill, leſt horrid plagues enſue;
And vengeance juſt thy hated life purſue.
Thou from adult'ry ſhalt abſtain, nor dare
In ſecret ſin—for I the LORD am there.
Thou ſhalt not ſteal, nor harbour in thy breaſt
A thought of ill againſt thy neighbour's reſt.
Nor yet againſt thy friend falſe witneſs bear,
Nor ſhalt thou covet what thy neighbours ſhare.
Theſe my commands attend with pious awe,
My vengeance waits them who tranſgreſs my law."
Then paus'd the voice—terrific trumpets ſound
The mountain ſhook, and earthquakes rent the ground!
Tremendous thunders ſhake the ſolid world,
And forky light'nings fiery ſheets unfurl'd.
Swift from the bounds the daunted Hebrews flew,
Stood afar off, nor wiſt they what to do:
'Speak thou, and we will hear, (the people cry)
But let not GOD, leſt we with terror die.'
This ſaid to Moſes, they at diſtance view'd
The glorious ſcene where the Eternal ſtood.
Swift at command, where awful clouds of night
Bemantled round the piercing throne of light,

The prophet haſted, nearer to ſurvey,
Exhaling æther from a purer sky.
In deep communion on the Hebrews' fate,
And forming laws to regulate the ſtate,
There ſtood the man, whilſt heav'n's eternal day
Beam'd on his head the joy-inſpiring ray.
Gilded with light which iſſued from the throne,
O'er all his face the ſplendid radiance ſhone;
Angelic, more ſublime, the prophet mov'd,
The All-Creating Hand his ſoul improv'd.
Cherubic throngs await their GOD,
Attendant on his ſov'reign nod;
Too great a ſtate for mortal eye,
They hover juſt above the sky;
Myriads of bright celeſtials on the wing,
Loud plaudits thro' th' ethereal concave ring;
Deep liſt'ning when their GOD's addreſs began,
With mild inſtructions to the meek-ey'd man:
"Who ſmite or curſe their parents, thou ſhalt doom
The hated wretches to an early tomb;
Th' unpitying hands, who for their worldly gain
Steal a poor brother for a captive's chains,

Death be his portion who would ſell a ſlave,
In exile doom'd to an untimely grave.
Whilſt waiting fondly for a ſon's return,
Their only hope the aged parents mourn;
His ſorrowing partner, anxious at his ſtay,
Deſolate ſeeks him on the lonely way.
On him dependant, by his labour fed,
Depriv'd of him, they want their daily bread;
Whilſt round the mother weeping children throng,
And hope, and fear, and wonder where he's gone;
Whilſt he amid his foes, with wounded breaſt,
Foreſees their woe, and ſinks with grief oppreſt:
Steel'd to their torture, this diſtreſs alone
Forces the tear, and heaves the bitter groan:
Abhorr'd be him who dooms a ſlave to chains,
Death be his portion, and eternal pains!
Thou ſhalt not raiſe an ill report, nor add
Ill words to what the ſland'rous tongue has ſaid;
For I the LORD mark what is juſt and right,
And innocence oppreſs'd I bring to light.
When fraudful tongues would wound thy neighbour's fame,
Firſt know the right, ere thou condemn the ſame;

For what art thou? frail man! vengeance is mine,
I judge the guilty, and make virtue ſhine.
Reports of ill ſtand long, and fly with ſpeed,
But ſecret envy hides the worthy deed;
It ſhall not be—thou my commands obey,
The cauſe of injur'd worth mine eyes ſurvey.
Whoe'er with hoſpitable cares attend
The ſuff'ring ſtranger, I will be their friend."
Engraven on a ſtone with ſacred awe,
The favour'd man records the wond'rous law;
Oblations pious then, with rites divine,
All Iſrael offer'd at the hallow'd ſhrine;
Then bowing lowly, each according tongue
Humbly reply'd, 'Th' Almighty's will be done.'
Then GOD the model of a temple drew,
With gold and colours of a various hue:
" The ark and mercy-ſeat emboſs'd in gold,
And blue and purple ſhall the poſts enfold;
With curious needle-work enwrought with art,
Four poliſh'd pillars ſhall its ends ſupport;
Within this vail the ſacred ord'nance bring,
Whilſt o'er the ark gold cherubs ſpread their wing;

In coſtly garments rob'd, my prieſts ſhall ſhine,
With holy pomp attending rites divine."
When the communion with his GOD was o'er,
Down from the mount the written law he bore;
Engrav'd on ſtone by that Almighty GOD
Who rear'd the earth, and ſpread the heav'ns
abroad.
Meanwhile the Hebrews anxious wait in vain
The favour'd prophet's ſafe return again;
Tir'd with the long delay, time wore apace,
Dubious again to view their prophet's face;
The clouds of heav'n which mantled Sinai's brow,
Continuing long, became no wonder now.
Loſt to all decency, in daring pride
To Aaron thus the hoſt of Hebrews cried:
" Up, make us gods to go before our face,
And lead us ſafely to the promis'd place;
As for this man who brought us hitherto,
We wiſt not where he's hidden from our view.
Like mighty nations round, lo! ſhall not we
To gods of gold in worſhip bow the knee?"

'Prepare ye gold,' the ſinning Aaron cries,
Swift for their golden trinkets Iſrael flies;
Theſe caſt in form, with careful ſpeed refin'd,
And poliſh'd ſolemn with an impious mind;
The graving tool 's with curious art applied,
'This be thy God, oh! Iſrael;' Aaron cried.
In form a calf th' Egyptian idol ſtood,
Warm with applauſe their deity they view'd;
Then fix'd it on a pole—the tribes ſurround—
Their loud rejoicings diſtant echos ſound.
Up to the ſkies the idol's incenſe ſmoke,
When thus to Moſes the Almighty ſpoke:
"Go, get thee down; thy people, thou haſt brought,
To gods of gold have for protection ſought;
Vain are the favours I on them beſtow,
For ſtubborn man his int'reſt will not know.
Vain on this mount in terrors have I ſpoke,
They ſpurn my preſence, and my laws have broke.
Let me alone to deal my wrath abroad,
And teach them how to brave an angry God."
'If thou (the prophet cried) refuſe to ſpare,
Am'lek and Og will the diſaſter hear;

And ſay thou flew'ſt to rid them of thine hand,
Unable to beſtow the promis'd land.'
Then as his wrath aroſe, the prophet flies,
Zeal ſhook his limbs, and darted from his eyes;
As nearer to the noiſy camp he drew,
Down from his hand the broken law he threw;
Then ruſhing furious thro' th' aſtoniſh'd throng,
Arreſted mirth, and ſtopp'd the joyful ſong:
" What haſt thou done!—(the man with anguiſh
cried:
What haſt thou done!"—ſcarce aught the prieſt
replied,
But trembling ſtood—whilſt ſwift the prophet flew,
And from its height the golden idol threw;
Then burnt to duſt, and ſcatter'd to the air,
Repentance deep the rebels' faults repair;
But righteous juſtice ſmote three thouſand dead!
To ſhades below th' unrepentant fled.
Then on the mount the prophet's pray'r began:
(Th' Almighty ſaw, and heard the favour'd man)
" All-gracious Heav'n, forgive the ſins this day,
Thy people ſpare, and turn thy wrath away."

Whilſt proſtrate Iſrael join repentant ſighs,
Smite on their breaſt, and lift their weeping eyes.
His pray'r accepted by the Pow'r Divine,
Around his head the bright'ning glories ſhine;
And God replied, " Obedience I demand,
And thou ſhalt lead them near th' promis'd land;
When next the ſhades at morn's approach with-
draw,
Hew thee two tables to contain the law;
Hither with them repair." The prophet flies,
Obedient ſoon as morning ſtreak'd the ſkies.

CANTO XV.

SOON as on Sinai's ſummit Moſes trod,
Down from the higheſt heav'n deſcended GOD!
Before his face a flaming cherub flew,
And ſhaded Moſes from th' o'erpow'ring view;
And thus proclaim'd the gracious names he bore,
Who lighted heav'n, and bid the thunders roar:
"The LORD, LORD GOD! long-ſuff'ring, good,
and true,
Whoſe tender mercies drop like early dew;
Gracious to all, abundant, good, and kind,
Forgiving ſins, but not the guilty mind;
Who ſtubborn to his law, refuſeth grace,
His woes entail'd ſhall cruſh his riſing race."

Thoſe words proclaim'd, whilſt from the blazing ſky,
Immortal glory dimm'd the prophet's eye,
Then paſs'd the GOD! and glanc'd by Moſes' ſight,
In ſplendid ſheets of heaven's tranſparent light!
His whole frame ſhook, unable to ſuſtain,
Or view with ſteady eye the glorious ſcene;
Soon as his thoughts from ſtrange amazement 'woke,
He bow'd to earth, and thus his God beſpoke:
" If favour I have found, my GOD, I pray,
Forgive our ſins, and guide us on our way."
His pray'r accepted, ſoon the voice replied,
And from his view the glorious viſions glide.

When near the camp the joyful prophet drew,
His ſhining face the hoſt of Hebrews view;
Celeſtial radiance ting'd his features o'er,
And in his hand the ſacred law he bore.
The elders ſaw, whilſt all the croud withdrew,
Daunted, at diſtance, and forbore to view;
The modeſt prophet from th' aſtoniſh'd throng
Viel'd o'er his face, and mov'd majeſtic on.

Then Aaron, for divine employ prepar'd,
Soon with his ſons the ſacred altar rear'd:
With ſolemn piety the prophet ſhed
The unctuous ſweets on Aaron's hoary head;
Whoſe rev'rend beard the fragrant drops down bear,
Which, oozing to his ſkirts, perfum'd the air.
Thus ſanctified, with glorious garments 'ray'd,
In woven-work and poliſh'd gold inlaid;
The purple robe down from his ſhoulders flow'd
Redundant, and in wavy radiance glow'd;
Small bells and pomegranates its edge ſurround,
In ornament, with tuneful tinklings ſound.
In works of art the azure ephods ſhin'd,
With ſtripes of ſcarlet and of purple lin'd;
The linen girdle's variegated dies
Enfold the waiſt, and charm the dazzled eyes;
A holy crown in pureſt gold enchas'd,
A plate inſcrib'd the lofty forehead grac'd;
A wreathen lace of blue confix'd behind,
Cloſe to his head the ſhining mitre join'd;
With curious work the poliſh'd breaſt-plate ſhone,
And near his heart transfix'd with gold it hung.
At time decreed, the holy tent was done
And the bright choir the ſacred praiſe begun;

The glorious garments worn in ſacrifice,
When due oblations to the heav'ns ariſe;
The vail which grac'd the colonade around,
Conceal'd the ark, and wav'd upon the ground;
Outſide the vail a ſacred table ſpread,
In fond remembrance of unleaven'd bread;
Unnumber'd myſt'ries to the Hebrews' view
Their GOD's commands and daily rituals ſhew.
Pleas'd with their work, Heav'n manifeſts to ſight
Its guardian care in glorious clouds of light,
Which o'er their tabernacle night and day
Secur'd their ſafety, and aſſign'd their way;
Which, when withdrawn, it was a ſign to move,
And journey onward to the land of love.

Arriv'd at Kadeſh, tuneful Miriam died,
And o'er her grave the prieſt and prophet ſigh'd;
Moſes and Aaron yield to GOD's beheſt,
Reſign their ſiſter to her native reſt.
Again the trumpets ſound—the clouds remove,
They journey on, as guided from above;
A mountain's height at diſtance far appear'd,
Beyond the clouds it's viewleſs top was rear'd.

The Heav'nly voice ſalutes the prophet's ear,
To haſten on, and pitch encampments there:
Aaron thy brother here ſhall ſink in death,
And thou on Piſgah ſhalt reſign thy breath.
Firſt from the mountain-top thou ſhalt ſurvey
The verdant land I give to Iſrael's ſway;
Ere ſince the rebel tribes from bondage came,
Their daring tongues have oft prophan'd my name.
So much inſulted by the ſtubborn crew,
I ſwore they ne'er ſhould promis'd Canaan view;
Upon their children I the land beſtow,
And thou ſhalt view—but to it ſhalt not go;
Joſhua, anointed captain of the band,
Shall in thy place lead Iſrael to the land;
A calmer reſt be thine—heav'n thy reward—"
The prophet ſtood reſign'd to all he heard.
The patient man with holy rev'rence bow'd,
Then on the way he join'd the joyful croud;
Full forty years had now their circuit ſped,
Since from the land of bondage Iſrael fled.

Now at the mount arriv'd, the trumpets ſound,
And at its foot they pitch encampments round;

When Aaron's fate the preſcient Moſes told,
Down o'er his cheeks the parting ſorrows roll'd;
Sedate alone, the prieſt, amid the throng,
Stood unaffected, ready to be gone.
Swift at the news Eliſheba appears,
And mourn'd to part, tho' bent with weight of years;
But with ſuperior piety reſign'd,
She yields to God—herſelf to heav'n inclin'd.
His weeping children, loth for him to go,
Hang round their ſire, and melt with filial woe.
On all around his bleſſing he beſtows,
Whilſt ev'ry eye in ſilent grief o'erflows;
He wav'd his hand, adieu! then paſs'd along,
Sedate, majeſtic, thro' the op'ning throng.
His purple robe redundant trail'd the ground,
And on his head the precious mitre bound;
The breaſt-plate, ſparkling with the noontide ray,
Beam'd on his breaſt, and ſhed a brighter day.
Then up the mountain Aaron ſpeeds along,
Follow'd at diſtance by the mourning throng;
Two ſons each ſide their pious father led,
Whilſt each their hearts with inward ſorrows bled.

The prophet more ſedate, preſs'd on before,
And in his hand the ſacred rod he bore;
The elders follow with aſtoniſh'd eye,
To view their prieſt on mountain's ſummit die.
Soon as on Hor the prieſt and prophet came,
They paid due worſhip to th' Almighty name;
Then from his back the purple robe he drew,
And o'er his ſon the glorious garment threw.
Eleazar 'ray'd in all the prieſt's attire,
Hung fondly anxious round his dying ſire;
Then Aaron, at th' Almighty's high beheſt,
Reſign'd his ſoul, and fled to realms of reſt;
In Moſes' arms he ſunk in ſoft repoſe,
And ſweetly ſlept, forgetful of his woes.
Soon as the prieſt had clos'd in death his eyes,
From ev'ry heart the burſting ſorrows riſe;
The noiſe of weeping reach'd the camp below,
And Iſrael join'd unanimous in woe.
Funereal rites with honours due were paid,
And in the mount the prieſt's remains were laid;
Full thirty days the dead ſincere they mourn,
With fear oppreſs'd, and anxious ſorrows worn.

CANTO XVI.

AT length arriv'd where Piſgah's height commands
A nearer view of Canaan's verdant lands,
They pitch their tents—the prophet knew the place
To meet his GOD, and die before his face;
But ere he mounts in ſecret from the throng,
He gave inſtructions with a parent's tongue.
Impreſs'd upon their minds the wonders ſhown,
The glorious honour which their GOD had won;
Devouring plagues, the ocean's parted waves,
The burning Sinai, and the rebels' graves;
Reciting from the firſt the mercies giv'n,
The melting rock, and manna ſent from heav'n.

Amid the croud the prophet next beſtows,
And from his lips the ſolemn bleſſing flows:
" Happy are ye, oh! favour'd race of GOD,
On you the ſacred promiſe is beſtow'd;
Happy are ye who feel the aid divine,
For Iſrael's good eternal pow'rs combine;
GOD is your help, and from his hand he'll ſhed
Unnumber'd bleſſings on his people's head;
The Sun of Righteouſneſs, with healing wing,
Shall the glad tidings of ſalvation bring;
The Prince of Peace in Shiloh ſhall deſcend,
And of his kingdom there ſhall be no end;
The great Meſſiah o'er theſe realms below
Shall reign a king, and cruſh each rebel foe."
Thus ſpake the man—attentive Iſrael ſtood,
And join'd the tears, whilſt tears his cheeks bedew'd.
Ominous this—the laſt inſtructions done,
To reſt they haſten with the ſetting ſun;
Reveal'd alone to Joſhua from on high,
The prophet's warning for his native ſky.

Ere blazing up from Jordan's ſtreams,
The lucid ſun ſhot forth his beams;
And rolling on his azure way,
Re-lights the glories of the day.
The prophet haſty roſe, while in his breaſt
He felt the hopes of a ſublimer reſt;
His mantle wrapt around, forth went the ſage,
Freſh ſtrung with ſtrength, and undecay'd by age.
Friended by ſhades, on Piſgah Moſes flew,
And gain'd the ſummit as the night withdrew;
And when the flaming orient ting'd the ſkies,
The land of promiſe open'd to his eyes.
There hills of laſting verdure crown'd with trees,
Whoſe fragrant ſpice perfum'd the tepid breeze;
The florid morn more ſmiling met his view,
All nature ſparkling with ethereal dew.
Here grazing cattle cropt the herbage round,
And plenteous products cloth'd the verdant ground;
Here trickling down the ſteep, the gloſſy rills
The vale beneath with cheering water fills;

Whoſe fertile glebe the golden harveſt crown'd,
Which wav'd luxuriant o'er its parent ground.
The ſtately trees ſome blooming bloſſoms wore,
And ſome bent downward with their weighty ſtore.
Here faireſt cities to his eyes diſcloſe,
With walls compact, a ſafe retreat from foes;
And far beyond the wilds of Arnon roſe
The royal dome where Canaan's kings repoſe;
Where Arad at that time the ſceptre ſway'd,
And divers nations annual tribute paid.
Above the trees, familiar with the ſkies,
The fanes of Og, great Baſan's king, ariſe;
Here Heſhbon, Sihon's city, met his ſight,
Th' Amorian monarch, mighty in the fight;
Who claim'd extenſive tracts of country round,
From Arnon's wild to Jabok's unknown bound;
In battle wreſted from the impious band,
Who bow to Moloch's ſhrine in Moab's land;
Whoſe riſing tow'rs at diſtant ken he eyes,
Magnificently mantling in the skies.
Here Jordan's ſapphire water laves the ſhore,
And ruſhes on to join wild ocean's roar.

Hills, vales, and cities, far beyond his view,
Wrapt in confuſion, from his ſight withdrew;
Endleſs the proſpect—tow'rs on tow'rs ariſe,
Fields, ſeas, and mountains, dance before his eyes.
As o'er his head the ardent ſun aroſe,
Beneath a ſhade he waits his laſt repoſe;
He o'er his face ſerene his mantle threw,
Whilſt death's cold drops his fainting limbs be-
dew;
No more terreſtrial proſpects ſtrike ſurprize,
He ſunk in death—and clos'd in peace his eyes.
Now from their bleſt abode on high,
A guardian hoſt deſcends the sky;
Meet the wing'd ſpirit on his way,
And bear him to eternal day.
As thro' the beamy ſpheres the prophet flew,
Ten thouſand glories burſt upon his view;
Around him, deck'd with ſuns the fervid skies,
And troops of ſeraphs hail him as he flies.
Beneath his feet the glowing planets roll'd,
Above his head the higheſt heav'ns unfold.

Loſt in the wonders, his expanſive mind
To heav'nly rapture all his pow'rs conſign'd.
Immanuel's throne then open'd on his ſight,
He ſprung extatic to the realms of light.
His laſt remains an angel from the sky,
For ever hid from ev'ry human eye.
Meantime the tribes, with fears foreboding, mourn
Their much-lov'd prophet, waiting his return;
But when reveal'd, the ſad event they knew,
The ſigh unfeign'd his wondrous virtues drew.
Their common parent Iſrael's hoſts deplore,
And ev'ry face the marks of ſorrow wore.
In Moab's plains they audible in woe,
All honour to his memory beſtow.
Full ſix-ſcore years, the pious prophet's age,
Meek, kind, and gracious—mighty, wiſe, and
ſage—
So ſhall each ſon of worth his country's fame
With honour win, and memorize his name.
A heathen hoſt diverts them from the grave,
And num'rous hands the beamy falchions wave;

Juſt on the borders of the fruitful land,
Foes leagu'd with foes diſpute the Hebrew's ſtand.
Now Joſhua next the Hebrew ſceptre ſway'd,
Ordain'd of GOD, the Iſraelites obey'd;
Exalted valour points him for the war,
And fame already bore his name afar.
Aided by Heav'n, from Arnon they expel
The giant hoſts, and in their cities dwell;
In vain to numbers Sihon truſts the fight,
The Hebrew arms are ſtrung with conq'ring might.
Zippor, the king of Moab's warlike band,
And Og, diſpute their title to the land;
The mighty giants in the battle's field,
Their lives and kingdoms to the Hebrews yield;
Triumphant in the wars, all Iſrael bore
Reſiſtleſs on, and won the promis'd ſhore.

Power Supreme, may Britain ſhare,
Like Iſrael's hoſt, thy guardian care;
Teach them how bleſt that land ſhall be,
Whoſe actions with thy word agree.

Make the high rulers of this favour'd isle
Needfully wise with thy auspicious smile;
May the dire mis'ries of the world, their care,
Their helping hand, and soft compassion share;
As instruments of thine thy aid bestow,
And thro' our land may Israel's blessings flow.
Then, like thy race of old, in fame we rise,
And rear our turrets to the mantling skies;
Whilst round our coasts celestial legions guard,
And boding mischief in the birth award.



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